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Land Ho!

[See page 77

HE WAS STRUCK BY AN AVALANCHE OF WATER THAT LIFTED HIM CLEAR OF EVERYTHING

LAND HO!

By

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CENTRAL MISSOURI
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Warrensburg

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Land Ho!

The Dollar

HIS name was Angus Macpherson—pronounced MacPh*air*son—but he was so intensely Scotch that in every ship he had sailed in men called him Scotty. He had a face like a harvest-moon, with a sorrowful expression of the eyes, a frame like a gladiator's, a brogue modified from its original consistency to an understandable dialect, and the soul of a Scotchman — which means that he was possessed by two dominant and conflicting passions, love of God and love of Mammon. Add to these attributes a masterful knowledge of seamanship and an acquaintance with navigation, and you have a rough sketch of him as he stood at the wheel of a tow-barge just out of New York.

Her name was the *Anita*, and she was the second barge in a tow of two. Ahead of her, at the end of a ninety-fathom steel tow-line, was the sister barge *Champion*, and at an equal distance farther ahead was the steamer *Proserpine*. Each barge carried stump spars and mutton-leg canvas—which was why Scotty, weary of the endless work in the

deep-water wind-jammers, had gone "tow-barging"—and the three craft belonged to one owner.

The skipper, a young man with a humorous face and democratic manner, as became a lowly barge skipper, appeared before the Scotsman, jingling in his hand a number of bright silver dollars. Scotty eyed them hungrily.

"Fine, aren't they, Scotty?" he said. "How many of these plunkers does the devil need to buy your soul?"

"More than you can count, Cappen Bolt," answered Scotty, gravely. "My soul no belongs to me, but to my Maker."

"Nonsense," laughed the captain. "A Scot loves the siller first, his Maker next. Why, a Jew can't make a living in your country, Scotty."

"Possibly not, cappen; but it's no because Scotchmen are dishonest. The Lord has given us wits—that's all."

"Dead broke, Scotty?" asked Captain Bolt, idly.

"I banked the most o' my pay, sir. Ay, I'm what you might call broke."

"Too bad! Ought to have held some out. There 'll be no money at Philadelphia. Owner's kickin'. Wants to save the interest, and he won't pay off till we get back."

Scotty's face assumed a rueful expression, and Captain Bolt watched it from the tail of his eye; then, before Scotty could speak, the prolonged clatter of the steward's dinner-bell began, and the

captain moved towards the companion, pocketing the coins as he went. One fell on the deck, the noise of the bell preventing its fall being heard, and the captain did not see it. But Scotty did, and he watched it roll back towards the taffrail, assume a spiral motion, and lie down just aft of the quarter-bitt. The captain was now down in the cabin, but Scotty picked up the coin to hold for him until he came up. He should have let it lie.

For it was bright and beautiful to look at, hard and slippery to the touch as he held it in his trousers pocket, a pleasing contrast to the coming emptiness of that pocket in Philadelphia. Scotty's soul went through the usual conflict in such cases, and when Captain Bolt came up, rubbing his mouth, love of Mammon had won over love of God, and he said nothing about it. Shortly after, he was relieved, and he went forward. On the way a revulsion set in, and he turned back, resolved to hand it over, as though he had forgotten; but the captain had stepped below again, and with the memory of his boasted honesty and the certainty of the captain's scepticism and ridicule in his mind, he turned again and went to the forecastle. When he had eaten his dinner, and slept four hours, he found on waking that his inclination to return it was stronger than at noon; but the certainty of being disbelieved had gained equally in strength, and the dollar remained in his pocket—a source of guilty joy and expectant misgiving. He longed for the day when

it would be spent and off his mind, and calculated the days and hours before the tow would reach Philadelphia.

But Scotty did not reach Philadelphia; he fell overboard just within the Delaware capes, and though he bawled lustily as the black side of the barge slipped by him in the darkness, and was answered in kind by his watchmates above, the noise did not reach the relentless power eleven hundred feet away, and he was left behind. But one had thrown him a life-buoy, and on this he floated until daylight, when an outbound tug picked him up. The tug was bound to Boston.

"I'll e'en make the best o' it," said Scotty, as he wrung out his wet clothing in the tug's small forecastle. "And I'll regard the dollar as a special deespensation of an all-wise Providence; for what would I do in Boston wi'oot a bit o' money in my clothes?"

But he did not reach Boston. The tug had a full crew, scant accommodations, and a hard-hearted captain, who decreed that Scotty should be put aboard the first craft that would take him. This happened to be a three-skysail-yard American ship —the *Baltimore*—two days out from New York for Shanghai, whose skipper backed his yard in answer to the tug-captain's offer to give him a sailor, and whose third-mate received Scotty — not with open arms, but clinched fists, as he dropped, swearing, to the deck in a bosun's chair.

"You ought to be glad you're alive," said her

skipper, harshly, when Scotty had, later, come aft to protest against his abduction. "He pulled you out of a life-buoy, where you'd ha' drowned 'fore the next craft came along, and puts you aboard a big, safe ship where you couldn't fall overboard if you tried. Get forward, now, and stop this talk."

"And am I to be put on the articles?" demanded Scotty. "I expect to wark where'er I be; but do I get pay, I'm askin'?"

"No. My articles are full. You'll *wark* your passage."

"Four months' sleevery in a hell-ship," growled Scotty, as he went forward. "This comes o' back-sleedin'. Lord forgi' me for it, but the punishment is hard. Howe'er, I'll just hang on to the dollar. I'll ha' earned it long this side o' the cape."

He did, and continued to earn it until the ship had neared the Yangtse-Kiang. Marked for the officers' attentions by his initial profane and irreverent comment on his transferral by the tug-captain, he was assaulted on the slightest provocation by the mates—no bigger than he or more skilful of fist, but justified by the law—and, though easily the best sailorman of the mixed crew, was put at distasteful tasks while inferior men worked at sailorly work on ropes and rigging.

There was nothing of this in the watch below, for Scotty could thrash the best two men forward, and led them all in forecastle discourse; but as it was a mixed crew, none too honest, in his opinion,

he made a monk-bag—a leather pocket—for his dollar, and hung it around his neck; and, to further protect the precious coin, forswore his religion, called himself a Catholic and the monk-bag a phylactery, with a saint's relic within. This brought him to the notice of a gentle-souled Portuguese of the crew, a true believer, who made friends with the Scot and earned his confidence before he learned of the shamness of the phylactery. Scotty, on lookout one night, told him this in a burst of confidence that also included a confession of his peculation. His friend, horrified, not at the theft, but at the sacrilegious fraud, informed him that the coin was accursed, that his soul was accursed, and that the only salvation for him in this life and the next was, first, that he return the stolen dollar by hand to its rightful owner, next that he become a real believer in the only true church instead of an impostor.

"If you do not," he said, "you have alla time badda luck till you die, then purgatory and the flame."

Perhaps the flames of Sheol could not have turned Scotty from his faith; but he was certainly impressed with the first clause of the obligation.

"Ye maun be right, Manuel," he said; "for, though I thought it a deespensation, I find that all my hard luck came after it. I'll gie it back when I may."

"Who's on lookout here?" demanded the burly

third mate as he climbed the forecastle steps. "Hey, who's on lookout?"

"I am, sir," answered Scotty, as Manuel drew out of the way.

"Get down on the main-deck, you dago son of a thief," bellowed the officer, aiming a kick at the retreating Portuguese. "D' ye see that light?" he said to Scotty. "With a man to help you keep lookout, d' ye see it?"

Scotty, derelict in his duty, did not see it for some moments—in fact, not until the third mate was through with him. Then he looked through closing eyes to where the third mate pointed—dead ahead, where a white light shone faintly in the darkness.

"Ay, ay, sir," he said, thickly. "I see it; and I'll e'en remember this night when I meet ye on shore, Mr. Smart. I'm no shipped in the craft, and it's a matter for the underwriters to know—puttin' me on lookout. As it is, I doot I'd meet trouble should I pull yer damned head off the noo. I'm no a shipped man, d' ye hear?"

The last was like the roar of an angry bull, and the officer backed away from the enraged Scotchman. Then he descended the steps, and in a minute a man came up and relieved him.

The light did not move, and, the wind being gentle, the day broke before the ship had come up to it. Then they saw a black tramp steamer, rolling easily in the trough, with a string of small

flags flying from aloft and the English ensign from the flag-staff at the taffrail. There was an exchange of signals between the two crafts until eight bells struck, and then Scotty, just about to sit down to his breakfast, was called aft and told to get his belongings ready for another transshipment. Scotty's belongings, the few rags he had collected by various methods from his shipmates, were hardly worth taking; but he regretted his breakfast, though glad to quit the ship. As he slid down the davit-tackle he surmised the meaning of the change by the expression on the third mate's face as he peered over the rail, and some words uttered by the captain, among which he only made out one—"underwriters."

"I'm told," said the semi-uniformed captain of the tramp, "that you are a castaway, picked up on the American coast, and are discontented with the ship."

"I dinna ken what the sleeve-driver's telt ye, cappen," answered Scotty, his brogue a little thicker from his emotions, "but I agree that I'm discontented."

"What's wrong with your face?"

"Ran foul o' the third mate's fist for no seein' your light. I were no one o' the crew, yet they put me on lookout. And I strongly suspect, cappen, that I'm bundled off mair on account o' that than because of my discontent."

"Possibly; but I'm a man short, and will sign

you at Shanghai wages — three pounds a month. You will not be struck here, and will be well treated while you do your work. We're bound for Boston, and will go on when the engine is mended."

"I'm obleeged to ye, sir," said Scotty, radiantly. "And Boston's the port for me, sir. I've strong reasons for strikin' that coast."

He still had his dollar secure in its leather casing, hung to his neck; but in this ship he said nothing about it.

Nothing unpleasant happened to him on this passage homeward; and he fondly believed that his sincere intent to return the dollar to Captain Bolt had changed his luck — that his painful friction with Mr. Smart's fist was a providential happening; but Providence had ordered otherwise, and in this manner: The steamer captain, ahead of his reckoning while approaching the coast in thick fog, ran his ship at full speed onto the sands of Cape Cod. He was unable to back off; a rising wind and sea threw the steamer broadside to the beach, and here she churned a hole for herself from which a wrecking tug could hardly pull her.

But a wrecking tug was sent for, by signals to the shore when the fog lifted, and in time one arrived, with a lifeboat in tow—which was a lucky forethought of some one, for the rising wind and sea had developed into a storm that was breaking the ship in pieces. Anchored well out, and steaming with full power into the teeth of the gale, the tug slacked down the life-

boat, and one by one the crew sprang into the sea and was pulled in. Six trips in and out completed the rescue, and Scotty came out on the last, with the frantic captain, who never ceased his bitter self-reproach.

But Scotty, irresponsible, had troubles of his own; he was wet and cold—for it was midwinter—and once aboard the wrecking tug, he fled the captain's inward objurgations, and sought the warmth of the fire-hold. Here he burrowed far along beside the boilers, and being utterly exhausted as well as chilled and drenched, and far from the captain's voice, fell into a sleep which lasted until the tug had tied up at Boston; then he came out, to find his shipmates gone ashore.

"Are you the missing man o' that crew?" asked the mate of the tug. "Your skipper says to stay here, and he'll bring you your pay."

"That's gude," answered Scotty, cheerfully. "But I'll just stretch my legs on the dock a wee bit, for it's a long time since I've been ashore."

The tug was moored outside of a small schooner, whose crew, as he crossed her deck, were "loosing" sails, singling lines and making other obvious preparations to getting away. As he mounted her rail to climb to the dock, he saw his captain looking sadly down on him.

"It's just as well, my man," he said, "that you couldn't be found; for I didn't sign you before the consul, and want no complications. However, I'll

pay you here. Just sign this receipt—an even two months at three pounds a month."

"Ay, ay, sir—and thank you, cappen."

He reached up and secured the slip of paper and a pencil handed down; then, first examining the document with Scottish caution, knelt down and signed his name to a receipt for six pounds. Passing it up, he received a cylindrical roll of coins from the captain, and thanked him again. Then he turned to drop to the deck; but his foot slipping on the hard, painted rail, he came down on all fours, and the roll of coin left his grasp.

"Catch it—quick!" called the captain from above. "Look out for that scupper; it's rolling right into it."

Scotty made a frantic scramble towards his treasure, and just missed closing his fingers on it before it rolled into the scupper; then he heard the tinkling sound as it struck the water over the side.

"Domnation!" he roared, as he rose to his feet. "Twa months' pay gone to the de'il, and I never e'en laid eyes on it."

"I'm very sorry, my man," said the captain. "There were six gold sovereigns, and I have your receipt. I can't pay you again."

"Na, na, cappen," answered Scotty, as sadly as the captain. "'Tis na fault o' yourn, nor mine; it's my luck, and it'll ne'er change till I git to New York and find my old skipper. I'm under a curse, I am."

But the captain had gone.

"Want to get to New York?" asked a voice behind him.

"That I do," said Scotty, shortly, as he faced the speaker. It was the captain of the schooner.

"I'm a man short," he said. "Where's your clo's?"

"On my back, cappen. I lost twa months' pay the noo, and can't repleenish my wardrobe."

"It's fine weather, and you won't need any. I pay twenty a month. Turn to."

Scotty went to New York in this schooner—that is, he went as far as the Sandy Hook Lightship, where the skipper, a man of poor judgment, mistakingly put about under the bow of an outward-bound steamer, which had slowed down to discharge her pilot, and which went ahead too soon for the welfare of that schooner. The impact was not dead on — it was a glancing blow that the schooner received, and it only carried away the weather main rigging and the davit on the stern. But Scotty was at work in this weather main rigging, and foreseeing disaster to the frail spider web to which he clung, he leaped for the big stockless anchor of the steamer just before it caught the shrouds. On this he sat perched, while wire rope snapped over and around him, and as the steamer forged ahead, managed to make himself heard over the shouts and curses with which the two skippers paid their parting compliments. He was lifted up and taken to the captain—a man black in the face from rage and overstrained vocabulary.

The captain greeted Scotty with inarticulate snorts.

"And can ye put me on some craft bound in, cappen?" asked Scotty, anxiously.

"Na-ow," roared the irate man. "Put you 'board nothing. Nor will I put you on the articles, curse you. I'll put you to work, and if you don't work your hands off, I'll charge you for your passage to Melbourne. Get out o' this."

"I tell ye," roared Scotty, in return, equally enraged at the prospect of another trip to the antipodes, "if ye don't get rid of me, ye'll no reach Melbourne. I'm a Jonah—a Jonah from the curse that has come to me. Put me ashore, ye poor, unfortunate fule."

Scotty was led away—after the gentle manner of the sea—and, in spite of his loud protestations that he was a competent able seaman, placed at the degrading labor of coal passing. When the cooler atmosphere of the stoke-hole had lowered his temperature somewhat, he again went to the captain, and earnestly told his story—of his theft, his bad luck and the bad luck he had brought to others.

"The curse is a-warkin' and a-growin' on me, cappen," he concluded, sorrowfully. "I'm the line-e-al desceendent o' the Flyin' Dutchman, sir. And I'll wrack your ship wi'oot meanin' to."

"I've read the Bible," said the captain, calmly. "I know what to do with Jonahs. I always throw them overboard."

Scotty shoveled and wheeled coal for three months,

then his prediction was fulfilled. Within a day's run to Melbourne, the screw slipped off the tail-shaft, and as it went to the bottom of the Indian Ocean, the racing engine went to pieces. This might not have prevented the steamer's reaching port under sail or tow, but the forward crank-pin broke, and the piston drove up with nothing to stop it, fetched up with a mighty jolt against the cylinder head—which held —and disconnected most of the bolts which bound the cylinder to its bed.

As the steamer fell off in the hollow of the sea, she rolled, and at the third roll the half-ton of metal toppled over, crashed down through the bottom of the ship, and sought the company of the screw. She was a compartmentless steamer, and in half an hour had followed, leaving her crew afloat in boats and on life-rafts. Scotty found himself in the boat with the captain, and wisely anticipating rebuke, had brought his shovel. The captain glared unspeakable things at him.

"It'll do ye no good the noo, cappen," said Scotty, anticipating the captain's outburst. "And if you, or a man o' your crew, lay the weight o' your finger upon me, I'll brain ye wi' my staff of office"—he elevated the shovel. "I warned ye in time; ye should ha' heeded me."

"Put down your shovel, and take an oar," commanded the captain. "I'd shoot you dead if it wasn't for the law. But you'll get out o' this boat, onto the first craft we meet—bound in or bound out."

"It'll be bound out, cappen," said Scotty, gravely. "Ha' no fear o' that."

It was an Italian bark, and as Scotty had predicted, she was bound out—to Rio Janeiro, as Scotty learned later. When the flotilla of boats swarmed into her path, she backed her main yards with much chattering and yelling of her crew, and Scotty's boat approached her side, where a Jacob's-ladder hung invitingly.

"Get up there, you miserable Sawnee," said the skipper. "I wouldn't put you aboard a white man's vessel, for you'll wreck her as you did mine."

It is very impolite, and sometimes inexpedient, to call a Scot a Sawnee.

Scotty climbed the ladder with his shovel, and when he stood upon the rail, turned and let it fly towards the captain in the stern-sheets. Had it struck edge first it would have cut him in two; as it happened, the handle merely flattened his nose. The captain sank down, then, rising, fired a revolver at Scotty, but missed, and forthwith ordered his men to give way.

And then, amid the excited cries and orders of the Italian captain, Scotty was pulled down from the rail, mobbed around the deck a little—though he fought furiously—by the three mates of the bark, and bundled into a hatch-house. And long after he was locked in he could hear the excited and puzzled accents of the Italian captain, calling to the misguided castaways, who would not be rescued; then

he heard the yards braced, and knew that he was homeward bound.

"If the bloody hooker don't sink on the way," he growled. "Howe'er, I'll no revile the craft that carries me, for it's lang odds she gits the warst o' it."

Shipboard etiquette is international. Scotty, in throwing the shovel, had violated the strictest clause in the code, and the Italian captain, though understanding nothing of the circumstances, had sensed the enormity of his offence, and punished him. But he was not confined long; the door was soon opened, and from the jabbering and gestures of the three mates he understood that he was to go forward. He went, and with a bucket of salt water and a piece of old canvas so improved his personal appearance as to partly overrule the prejudice against him.

Seamanship, like nautical etiquette, is international, and though he understood not one word of what was said to him, and though not a man aboard understood him, yet he knew what to do without orders, and soon proved himself superior to any of the officers. The rather impulsive, but generous, captain noticed this, and made as much of him as was possible without a common means of communication; but Scotty ascribed it to the influence of the unblessed, but jealously guarded, leather pendant often visible on his hairy chest. He made the most of this influence among the men forward, and even went to the blasphemous extent of making the sign of the cross on occasions, and repeating certain words,

picked up from his devout shipmates, of the Roman Catholic ritual. But when he prayed, alone and in the silence of the night, he prayed for forgiveness, for the removal of the curse, for opportunity to redeem himself—for the test of a ten-mile swim or a thousand-mile walk, to the end that he might place that stolen dollar in the hand of Captain Bolt.

But his prayers availed not. He became a man without a country. The Italian bark caught fire in the South Atlantic, and in the confusion of abandoning the charred and sinking hulk, Scotty found himself alone in a small quarter-boat, which, like himself, had been left behind, and which he had lowered and unhooked unaided. But he had been unable to find the oars, and the other boats were far away; so he spent seven days and nights in the cockleshell, freezing by night, roasting by day, with the horrors of hunger and thirst for company, and was then rescued in a delirious state of mind by a Norwegian barkentine, bound for Cape Town.

There is no need of recounting his further adventures in detail. He had now been a year without touching land, and he spent four more at sea before there came to him even a gleam of hope. No matter what the craft, or what the port bound for, something occurred to destroy the ship or prevent him finishing the passage. At times, when an alleged advance of pay was worked off, he drew clothing from the ship's slop chest, and always left it behind when the curse closed down upon him and removed

him from that ship. Once he was abandoned with a boy, third mate, and three others on a derelict which they had been sent to inspect, and from the neighborhood of which a furious gale drove their own vessel. They were rescued just before the derelict sank. Again, in Manila Bay, he swam to a near-by ship which he had heard was bound to New York, and secreted himself, only to find when at sea that she was bound for Liverpool. He made the stormy passage of the Horn in midwinter with the clothing he stood in.

Too eager to touch dry land at Liverpool, he quit the ship in a runner's boat before docking, and the boat getting in the way of an outbound ocean-tug, he went to sea on the tug, and was again put aboard the first craft met, an English four-master, bound for Calcutta. And it was in this ship that there came to him the gleam of hope mentioned. In her forecastle he found the quondam third mate of the big skysail-yarder, the Mr. Smart who, backed by the law, had thrashed him on the forecastle deck and later arranged his transfer to the tramp.

Scotty had long since forgiven him, regarding him as but an instrument of the Lord. But the instrument, down on his luck and 'fore-the-mast in a "lime-juicer," must needs refer to it, again and again, until the sorely tried man gave way. Then occurred one of the shortest and fiercest fights that ever delighted the souls of English sailors. Scotty did the fighting, and he struck out twice; but each

blow was like the kick of a mule, and Smart was carried aft to have his broken ribs and jawbone reset, while Scotty went in irons for murderous assault; but the captain released him on learning that the war began in an American ship. There was no further trouble between these two, but Scotty drew comfort and hope from the incident because it seemed his first victory over the forces that opposed him.

Cholera was rampant in Calcutta, and not a man but the skipper left the ship while there; then she sailed for New York, and Scotty's hope increased. He carefully guarded the black and grimy talisman of evil that hung to his neck, and prayed fervently for the final test that would redeem him; and he prayed, too—for his great trouble had softened and spiritualized him—that this big ship and large company should not suffer disaster on his account.

But as the ship reached soundings it seemed that the prayer was to be unanswered; for she came driving up to the light-ship before a southerly gale and sea that prevented any sail holding but the foresail and three lower topsails. All lighter canvas was blown away—and lower topsails and a lee shore are a bad combination.

The captain could not conceal his anxiety; there had been no sign of a pilot, and though the holding ground was good, his anchors were small—too small for his big ship. To add to the danger, the spume and spin-drift from the combers were thickened by a mist that seemed to descend from above, blotting out

the distant light-ship. But this mist was ahead; astern, the horizon was visible, and far this side of the horizon—not half a mile on the port quarter—was a sight that sent the blood coursing through poor Scotty's veins, and a prayer of thanksgiving to his lips.

Coming along before the storm, but on a convergent course which would soon bring her in the big ship's wake, was the steamer *Proserpine* towing her barges. Scotty knew them; every detail was pictured on his brain. He knew that big funnel, and big nigger-head in the bow; he knew the stump bowsprit of the *Champion*, with its one-chain bobstay; and he knew the *Anita* behind her, straight-stemmed, black and dingy.

And as he looked there came to him the conviction that here was the test required of him—that if he, the Jonah of many ships, should remain where he was, there would be one more catastrophe on the list, while some manœuvring of fate would again send him to sea; but that if he rid the ship of his presence, there was a chance, not only for the ship, but for himself.

Mounting the forecastle deck—where he had a right to be—he watched and waited until the three crafts astern were as one in the wake; then, shedding his oilskins and boots, he sprang overboard. He heard the shouts of a shipmate, and as he came to the surface, saw men on the rail, looking and waving. He saw the second mate heave over a life-buoy, but

it fell short, and he did not swim for it. The ship went on, for a square-rigged craft may not round to in a gale.

Scotty swam shoreward at first, for he knew that the steamer and tow would make leeway. On the tops of the seas he took his bearings, and then swam, or paddled, according to the inclination of the steamer's bow. In the hollows he swam towards her. Nearer and nearer she came, and at last he began hailing; but not a man could be seen on her deck, and the bridge was empty; the captain or mate on duty was in the warm pilot-house, no doubt—after the manner of tug-men. Hailing frantically, he met the wash of her bow wave and went under; when he came up she was past him, with her white-painted name staring at him. No one had seen or heard him.

The *Champion* was coming, and he swam into her path, barely missing a clutch at the steel towline whizzing past him. He hailed her, but there was no response. How could they hear, in the teeth of that furious wind? Realizing this, he saved his breath.

The barge, rolling along before the sea, was making good weather of it, yet she lifted and plunged heavily as the big billows passed beneath her—the chain bobstay often rising six feet out of water, and again sinking as far below. To catch this chain was all that he could hope for; to miss it meant death; for even should he be seen or heard as he passed astern, no power on earth could bring that tug back to windward in such a sea.

When but twenty feet away from him the bow lifted, dripping water from the hawse-pipes—and to the agonized man beneath it this bow and dripping hawse-pipes bore a harrowing resemblance to a large, implacable, yet weeping face, a face that expressed sorrow and condemnation—then it fell upon him, and the heavy iron chain struck his head, then glanced to his shoulder and bore him under. But the downward blow gave him his grip upon it; had it struck him while lifting, he might not have held.

Clinging for dear life, unable to move himself an inch against the rush of water, with head swimming from the impact of the chain, and lungs bursting from lack of air, he waited for the rise, and when it came, moved upward a foot. Then he was borne under again, this time with his lungs full of air, and he suffered less; and when he was lifted out, he gained another foot.

Four times he was plunged under before he had climbed high enough to avoid it, and then he rested, until his head cleared and the awful pain of fatigue left his arms. When strength came back he mounted to the bowsprit, crept in to the topgallant forecastle, and sprang down on the main-deck, to the consternation of two men at the weather fore-rigging. These were foremast hands, and Scotty had no present use for them. He ran past them in his stocking-feet—and they gave room to the wild-eyed apparition—and aft to the poop, where, besides the

helmsman, was a man who might be captain or mate, but who could certainly inform him.

"Is Cappen Bolt in charge o' the *Anita* the noo?" he asked, hoarsely, as he halted before him.

"Yes. Who the devil are you?" asked the astounded man.

"God be thankit!" exclaimed Scotty, and he mounted the taffrail—not for a swim this time, there was no need of it. Stretching back to the *Anita* was a steel trolley, which was all he wanted. Before the man could do more than yell at him, Scotty had hitched himself out on the towline beyond reach; then, for faster progress, he swung beneath it, head aft and downward, and in this position, hand over hand and leg over leg, he made his way along until the water took him. Filling his lungs with air and locking arms and legs around the rope, he let himself go; and he slid at the speed of the tug down the trolley and up again, traversing half of the length of the towline beneath the surface.

He was nearly dead and fully blind when he felt air on his face, and had only time to take a breath when a following sea immersed him again. But with another breath, he began to climb.

Captain Bolt, aft on the poop, saw men on the *Champion* waving arms and pointing a megaphone his way. He could not hear, nor could he hope to from the bow, yet he ran forward. As he reached the forecastle steps, an unkempt figure came in over the bow—a big, rawboned man in dripping rags,

with blood streaming from arms and legs, with a red, round, and sorrowful face bordered by long, matted, gray hair—with the gleam of incipient insanity in the eyes. He sprang off the forecastle and faced the captain.

"Cappen Bolt," he stammered, as he tore at a small leather bag with fingers and teeth. "Cappen —cappen—here it is. I've fetched it t' ye. I never spent it." From the bag came a stained and oxidized coin, which he forced into the amazed captain's hand. Then, sinking to his knees, he lifted his eyes to heaven, muttered a few inarticulate words, and fell over in a swoon.

"Here!" called the captain, sharply, to two of his men who had drawn near. "Take him below and strip him. Put him to bed, and I'll get some brandy. Lord knows who he is, or where he came from, but he's in a bad way."

Scotty was carried down the forecastle stairs and cared for; but he did not waken to drink the captain's brandy; the swoon took on the form of childlike sleep, and the sleep continued until the barges had made port and moored to the dock. Here, amid the confusion of making fast, opening hatches, and rigging cargo gear, Captain Bolt had about forgotten the mysterious stranger in his forecastle, and was only reminded of him when the captain of the *Champion* came aboard to inquire.

"He climbed up my bobstays, no doubt; he must have fallen overboard from that big Englishman

that anchored in the Horseshoe. Went crazy in the water, I suppose. He went out on your towline like a monkey. I wouldn't ha' believed a man could stand it. He was three minutes under water."

"I can't make it out," said Captain Bolt. "He put this in my hand"—he held out the blackened dollar—"and then went daffy. He's down below now. No, here he comes."

Scotty had climbed to the deck. He stood near the hatch, looking about with a doubtful, bewildered air at the docks and shipping. Then his face cleared a little, and like a cat in a strange street he moved slowly and hesitatingly along the rail towards the fore rigging. Then with one bound he swung himself to the top of the rail, and a mighty upward jump landed him on the string-piece of the dock. Here he paused long enough to sink to his knees and elevate his clasped hands; then he rose, walked hurriedly, and, breaking into a run, disappeared from sight behind the crowd of horses and trucks on the dock.

"By the Lord," exclaimed Captain Bolt, "I know him! It's Scotty. I lost him overboard off the Delaware capes five years ago. How'd he get picked up, I wonder? Where's he been? And this—" he produced the dollar. "I wonder if—why, very likely—a Scotchman has a conscience. Say, cappen, this seems funny. I put up a job on Scotty. I pretended to lose a dollar to see if he'd keep it, and he did. And I'll bet this is the one." He opened his knife and cut into the dingy coin. "Yes, it was a counterfeit."

The Ship-Owner

WEARY of world-wandering, Scotty had shipped in the tow-barge *Champion*—tow-barges are never far from port—and sat in the dusk of a September evening on the forecastle-deck, smoking his pipe and watching the black clouds banking up in the northwest, over the hills of Staten Island. The craft was at anchor off Tompkinsville; and as the skipper, mate, and the rest of the men lived in this town, and as the steamer, or, more properly, tug, which towed the *Champion* and her consort, had reached the dock too late to coal up that night, they had gone ashore to their families and friends, leaving Scotty in charge.

With him on board, however, was the owner, who, to save railway fare, was to make the trip to Philadelphia in the *Champion*, and who fretted exceedingly at the delay. As Scotty smoked and watched, this individual climbed the forecastle-steps. He had a very prominent nose, large ears and mouth, and called himself Mr. Jacob Steiner.

"How is it," he asked, sourly, "that you're not ashore, too?"

Scotty rose to his full height of six feet two, and looked down on him serenely. To Scotty had come the sorrowful yet resolute stare of the middle-aged sailor—the man who has often looked fate in the eyes—and he was not afraid of this ship-owner.

"I've no call to go, Mr. Steiner," he said, gravely. "My folk are over the water."

"All the better for you. Your money is for yourself."

"Ay, what there is of it, sir—and that's little enough."

"Are you kicking about your pay? Don't you get all you're worth?"

"Mair than I'm warth, possibly. I'm no kickin' only on general principles. A sailorman is paid vera little for the wark he performs. Barrin' a rare chance o' salvage, he never gets mair than a day's pay for a day's wark."

"Salvage!" snapped Mr. Steiner. "A direct gouge of a ship-owner—a robbery, pure and simple. If officers and crews were not cowardly and inefficient there would be nothing to salve."

"Ay, but if they were all cowardly and ineffeecient there would be no salving done, sir."

"Makes no difference," said the owner, peevishly; then, recurring to a former line of thought, he said: "You say you're not kicking? What's this talk about the grub? The captain says you're dissatisfied."

"I've heard complaints, sir; but I'm no kickin'.

I've sailed too long deep water to take exceeption to a little thing like grub."

"But the rest are."

"Ay, they're not accustomed to maggots. And, take my ward, sir, maggots are not nourishin', unless cooked. We get ours raw."

Again the owner changed the subject. "That a storm brewing over there?" he asked, pointing shoreward.

"It'll be a squall, I'm thinkin'," answered Scotty, "and, perhaps, mair than a squall. We're on the eve of an eequinoctial, and I'm in doot, to be frank wi' you, about the holdin' ground beneath."

"Why, aren't we safe—here at anchor?" asked Mr. Steiner, in some alarm.

"Safe enough, provided we don't drag. We're ridin' to the small anchor, and the ebb runs strong the neeght."

"Then why not drop the other?"

"It's a big job, sir—a job for all hands, and they're ashore. It's no shackled on."

"A job for all hands?" answered the owner, ignoring the last of Scotty's remarks. "Nonsense. It's a one man's job to drop anchor. I've seen it done. I can do it myself."

"Ay, that you might, sir; but can you lift a foot-link chain up to the ring o' the anchor? Did you no' see all hands liftin' that chain to the dock when we moored wi' it?"

"What's that got to do with dropping anchor?"

"Conseederable, sir; but I'm no' creeticising my superiors. If you'll tarn to and help, we may get it done in time."

The owner looked closely into Scotty's face, and might have asked further concerning anchors and chains; but a faint and exasperating smile had come to it, and he turned to the steps. "You are an alarmist, and I'm going to bed," he said, sharply. "If we need that other anchor down, drop it." Then he went down the steps.

Scotty watched him disappear in the darkness, and shook his head sadly; then he looked over the bow at the few links of chain hanging from the hawse-pipe, and shook it again, with a different meaning. They were not foot links as he had said; but they were fully nine inches in length, each a heavy lift for a man's hands, and there would be about fifteen in the air when the end was up to the anchor ring. He had spoken truly when he had called it a job for all hands.

The barge carried a patent windlass, and the squall found him with his hands on the lever. Pelted by the horizontal bombardment of wind and rain on the high forecastle-deck, he paid out the last fathom of the small chain, and then went down and stood near the windlass until the jarring vibrations coming along the chain told him that the anchor was dragging. He bounded up the steps and looked; the shore lights were hidden by the smudge, but right astern, twinkling faintly and visibly nearer, was the

riding-light of the consort *Anita*, whose anchor was evidently holding.

Scotty grasped the situation in an instant. A collision at the end of chain-cables would sink both barges. One must slip, and this being so, it had best be the *Champion*; for the *Anita* was new and more valuable, and in no immediate danger of dragging, while the *Champion* was practically adrift, and not to be stopped by anything but steam-power, or that other anchor. Securing a lantern, he descended into the chain-locker and disconnected the end of the chain; then he came up, cast off the gaskets and down-haul of the jib, trimmed the sheet down to port, and was taking in the slack of the halyards as the sail blew up, when the owner struggled forward to him in the darkness.

"Just in time," roared Scotty, in his ear. "Lend a hand on these hal'ards. I'm slippin' the chain to wark clear o' the *Anita*."

"What's the matter? What are you doing?" screamed the owner, in reply.

"Lend a hand, and don't talk."

They pulled the thrashing sail nearly up—which was enough. Then, ordering the owner to light the side-lights in the lamp-room, and bring them aft to the screens on the quarter, Scotty bounded up to the windlass lever, unhooked and lifted it, and, when the end of the chain had flown out the hawse-pipe in a shower of sparks, watched the barge, under the push of the backed jib, turn her head slowly away from the

wind. When the blast came from abeam he made fast the lee sheet, let fly the weather, and sped aft to the wheeling, bawling, as he passed the lamp-room, to "bear a hand wi' the leeghts." The binnacle was dark, and he could only surmise from the known direction of the wind as to how the barge was heading; but as he took the wheel, he saw, looming high and near over the starboard quarter, the riding-light of the *Anita*, and then saw the dim loom of the hull as it passed across the stern. He had slipped just in time.

He brought the wind on the starboard quarter and waited for the owner. When he came, struggling painfully with the two heavy side-lights, he forcefully instructed him in the method of securing them in place, and then ordered him to take the binnacle-lamps into the cabin and light them. Mr. Steiner obeyed uncomplainingly; but when there was light on the compass, and Scotty had steadied the craft at south-southeast, he put his mouth to the big sailor's ear, and shouted: "What are you doing with my vessel? Where are you going?"

"As I informed ye, I slipped the chain," answered Scotty, in a voice louder than the storm. "Had ye gi'en me a hand wi' the big chain as I requested, there wad na been need o' slippin'; and there's na time the noo. We're goin' into deep water, and even the big anchor wad na hold again our drift and the strong ebb-teed. I'll pick up Coney Island Leeght soon, and beach her on the sands.

"Why didn't you drop the other anchor, as I told you?" screamed the owner, dancing up and down in his rage and fear. "You're a mutinous scoundrel. I know your game. You're plotting against my interest. I'll have you in jail for this! You're working up a salvage job—that's what you're doing."

"Will ye please stand awa' from the binnacle so I can see?" roared Scotty.

Mr. Steiner obeyed this reasonable command—for, in spite of the word please, it was not a request; and he even did more—he rid Scotty of his presence, darting forward along the alley and down the poop-steps. Soon Scotty felt a shock along the deck.

"Damn the poor, misguided fule!" he grunted. "He's let go the big anchor wi' no string on it. I've heard o' the like, but never believed it. Lord help him, for the de'il can't the neeght."

He steered on—the course down the Narrows—occasionally lifting his eyes from the compass to search the shortened aspect for Coney Island Light. The first fury of the squall had now passed, but there was a steady, insistent pressure to the wind that promised continuance, and a vicious tumble of short sea rising, which was small index of what might be expected outside. But the air was not so thick; soon he made out a few landmarks, the lights of passing or drifting craft, Fort Tompkins's red-and-white light well astern, and finally the one he was looking for—the flashing red light on Norton's Point, Coney Island. It bore two points away on the weather, or

port bow, and he knew, as he looked, that he could not make it, even with all the sail the barge could carry. This was not much; she had once been a square-rigged ship, and still carried her three lower masts with tops, trestle-trees, and caps intact—and her bowsprit. From the foremasthead to the end of this bowsprit ran a makeshift-stay, to which was hung the jib mentioned, and on each lower mast was bent a mutton-leg sail.

Excepting the mizzen, or spanker—a brand-new purchase—these sails were old, so old and soft that if set, and the barge hauled on the wind, they would assuredly go to pieces.

Yet with this knowledge in his head, Scotty, with a deep, dark scheme, worthy of a Scotchman, also in his head, headed the barge straight up for Norton's Point Light, and, even as the rotten jib blew from the bolt ropes, called to the owner, whom he saw, indistinctly, struggling aft by the lee-alley. Mr. Steiner came near him.

"I think it best, Mr. Steiner," he said—and there was much of request and nothing of command in his tone now—"that you loose the three sails—just cast off the brails, one sail at a time, and I'll jump and help you trim aft the sheet."

"What for?" demanded the owner.

"So we can make Coney Island and beach her, sir. We're far to leeward."

"You will *not* beach my vessel. I forbid you. I know your mind, you scoundrel. You did not tell

me the truth about that anchor. You did not tell me there was no chain attached. Don't you dare attempt to wreck this barge!"

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Scotty, mildly. "Then we'll let her drift, and I'll get into dry clothes and oil-skins for the time. Fresh water is vera cauld on the skin, Mr. Steiner." He dropped the wheel, useless now without headway, and started forward, but turned back and said: "I'll simply say, sir, that I informed ye in time that the chain was no shackled on, and asked your assistance at the job, but ye refused."

"You did not tell me in language that I could understand. You veiled your meaning," replied the owner, furiously.

"But ye understand it the noo, and it's the same language. If this barge is lost it's your own doing, Mr. Steiner."

He went to the forecastle, got into dry clothing and oil-skins, then entered the mate's room in the cabin, and entered, in a much neglected log-book, properly dated, the statement that the owner had refused assistance in shackling on the chain, had let go the anchor without consulting him, and had forbidden him to beach the barge on the soft and safe shore of Coney Island. He also entered his own good reasons for slipping the chain.

"For I'm offeecially in charge o' the craft," he chuckled, "and it's my duty to keep the log, which is excellent testimony in court."

But he said nothing of the silent testimony to the owner, nor of the fact that, being officially in charge, he had legal power to overrule his passenger.

He found this anxious man, cowering from the storm near the binnacle, and in the act of extinguishing one of the binnacle-lights.

"I see no occasion for this waste of oil," he snarled, "now that you're not steering."

"Right enough, sir," answered Scotty, cheerfully. "And it 'll be well, I'm thinkin', to take in the green-and-red leeghts, inasmuch as we're no under command." He lifted in the side-lights and stood them on deck. "But we'd better leave 'em lit."

"But that light up forward. Take that down."

"No, no, Mr. Steiner. That's the lawful leeght to carry when under way and no' under command."

"We're not under command?" inquired the owner. "Then get under command. What are you here for? Where are we going to?"

"I take it we're driftin' broadside right into the Swash Channel—unless we're too far to the east; and if so, we'll fetch up on the East Bank."

"We don't want to fetch up on anything. Get this vessel under way at once."

"Ay, ay, sir; then will ye gi' me a hand to set the foresail? It 'll pull her head off 'fore the wind so I can steer."

This was logical, and suited both of them. They set the small triangle of sail, after a fashion, and the barge swung off before the wind; but as she gathered

way, and as Scotty took the wheel, the foresail ripped from top to bottom and in ten seconds was in ribbons.

"Well," shouted Scotty to the owner, "I can keep her 'fore the wind and in the channel till the sea comes."

"What then?" asked the owner.

"We'll have to drift, or heave to under a tarpaulin, wi' this wind. That is, sir, unless ye'll agree to my beachin' her on Sandy Hook. I might make the Hook by careful steerin'."

"No!" yelled Mr. Steiner. "I will not have my vessel wrecked!"

"Vera good, then. Rig the two leeghts again. Mr. Steiner, and I'll keep her off the bottom, as you say."

"Where are we going to now?" asked the owner, when he had shipped the side-lights.

"Unless I lose my way, sir, right oot to sea. As ye'll observe, I'm steerin' the course doon the channel—sou'-sou'east."

Mr. Steiner observed; but, as he could not read the compass, he could not verify the statement.

"See that you don't wreck this vessel," he said, significantly.

"I want ye to remember, Mr. Steiner," said Scotty, at length, "that it was under your orders to get this craft under command that we lost the foresail."

Mr. Steiner turned his back to him and went down the companion. He was drenched and cold—in no

condition to argue on seamanly ethics, and of no use on deck whatever, as he must have realized. Scotty, however, with an even better knowledge of his uselessness, made loud and instant protest against being left alone, but, on its being ignored, lapsed into as cheerful a silence as the conditions would admit.

The sea was rising, and, though the air was clearing of rain, showing up the more distant lights, the wind was unquestionably increasing. Fairly comfortable in his warm oil-skins, and smiling a deep, dark, Scotch smile in the glow from the binnacle, Scotty steered the course down the Swash Channel, but it was not until he heard faintly, from somewhere, the clang of a bell-buoy that he was sure that he was in it. Then he brought Romer Shoal Light a little on the port bow, went past it in a flurry of a squall, and soon picked up the Scotland Light-ship. By midnight he had left this behind and was in the open sea. He had obeyed the owner, and kept her off the bottom, but only to drive seaward with but one good sail on board, and this in the wrong end of her.

There were a few things on his mind now of more importance than keeping that wallowing barge before the wind, and he dropped the wheel, letting her broach to in the trough, took in the side-lights, and went to the mate's room, where he entered in the log the following items: That the owner had ordered him to get the craft under command, which had resulted in the loss of the foresail; that he had forbidden him to beach her on Sandy Hook; and that

he had gone below, leaving him alone at the wheel, with the difficult task of steering without forward canvas, of keeping a lookout, and of navigating from memory alone past obstructing shoals and rocks to the open sea, with a riding-light up forward, which at any time, while under way, might have been mistaken for the masthead-light of a steamer.

The barge was now rolling heavily in the short sea, and seamanship demanded that she be hove-to—that is, placed under short after-canvas, to steady her; and as this was a job for more than one, Scotty hunted for the owner, and found him seated in the after-cabin beside a bottle and a glass. His face was flushed and his eye glared menacingly.

"Will ye gi' me a hand on deck, Mr. Steiner?" said Scotty, mildly. "I want to set the spanker."

"No, I won't," yelled Mr. Steiner, thickly. "You scheming scoundrel, I'll be a party to none o' your tricks. You've put my property in jeopardy, and I'll put you in jail for it, remember that!"

"Ay, all in good time, Mr. Steiner," answered Scotty. "But ye won't put me in jail 'less ye get me ashore, and you won't get me ashore 'less ye take better care o' your property. She's got to carry sail."

"Get out o' this cabin."

"Ay, I will; and I'd like to get off your old ballahoo."

Scotty went on deck in a very natural rage. As he could not set the spanker alone, he did the next

best thing—rigged a tarpaulin in the mizzen-rigging; and as the gale showed every promise of increasing, and lasting, this might be all the barge would require to hold her head up to the seas. It answered well, as the wind blew then; and when he had again shipped the side-lights and taken down the riding-light forward—for she was now officially under command—he took the bearings of Sandy Hook and Scotland Lights, pricked a point of departure on the mate's chart, and entered it in the log, with the direction of the wind and the probable drift of the barge. Then he added the item that the owner was intoxicated, and had refused assistance or sanction in making sail

There were plenty of craft — steam and sail — passing back and forth at distances too great for any communication but that of the International Signal Code, which the barge did not include in her equipment; but, as it was no part of Scotty's plan to be towed in, the lack of flags and signal-book did not worry him.

Faithfully keeping the log and lookout, snatching cat-naps seated in coils of rope, Scotty spent the next three days and nights on deck, while the owner spent the time in the cabin, only appearing once a day—in the morning—to look out on the waste of heaving sea, snarl a few admonitory remarks to Scotty, and go down.

But on the third night the wind died away to a half-gale from the northeast, though the sea still held

to its original direction, and the barge plunged and rolled heavily in the trough, head to wind. And as the sun rose in a clear sky, Mr. Steiner came up, with bloodshot eyes and shaking hands, and looked around for Scotty, finding him face up to the sun on the main-hatch, sleeping the sleep of utter exhaustion. He awakened him.

"Isn't it time to get up?" he inquired, as the big Scot opened his eyes. "Nine o'clock in the morning, and you sound asleep!"

"God's curse on ye!" growled Scotty, as he hove his long frame upward. "The first time in eighty hours that I've lain me doon, and then not till daylight showed me nothing in sight. Wa' to your whuskey, ye swine, and le' me be."

"The whiskey is gone," said Mr. Steiner, somewhat plaintively. "Have you any?"

"Not a drop. It's no' provided for the crew o' this packet."

"Well, can't you do something except sleep? We've been out here long enough. Why don't you sail this vessel back?"

Scotty's face hardened as he looked around, and then he went to the compass, looked in, and came back.

"It's a good, fair wind for Sandy Hook, though a little heavy for that old canvas. I'm just tellin' ye, but if you say so, we'll set the mainsail. Mind ye, it may blow away; but there's no whiskey this side o' port. What d' ye say, Mr. Steiner?"

Mr. Steiner looked doubtfully at the brailed mainsail, then at the rolling sea.

"I know just how you feel, sir," ventured Scotty. "I feel myself that a drink wadna be amiss, after this drill; but, mind ye, the sails are old, and—you're the owner."

"Set them," said the owner, decisively. "Get this barge home."

Hot coppers are bad for the judgment.

"All right, sir, if you say so," said Scotty, "but it's against my protest, Mr. Steiner. I doot that the canvas holds in this wind."

It did not; they hauled out the mainsail with but little trouble, and it held together until Scotty, at the wheel, had backed the barge broadside to the wind. Then, at the second roll to windward, a rent appeared, and in a minute the sail was in ribbons. Scotty left the wheel, and, as the barge fell back into the trough of the sea, entered in the log the statement that the owner had sacrificed the mainsail by ordering it set against his protest. Then he came out and faced him.

"Mr. Steiner," he said, sternly, "ye'll be willin' to admit, I take it, your hopeless inefeeciency as commander o' this barge. We're adrift a hunder miles at sea, wi' no canvas but the spanker, and we canna sail under that—it's only good to heave-to with in a gale. And it's all your doing, not mine What will ye advise doing now?"

"I don't know," said Mr. Steiner. "How do I

know? Why didn't you tell me about the anchor? That would have saved us."

"I told ye plain enough, but ye didna understand. I repeat, what do you advise doing?"

"Do what you like," said the owner, sulkily.

"Do you resign the responsibility to me? Understand, if you do, and I bring this barge into port, I'm entitled to salvage. Think well, Mr. Steiner."

"I knew that was your game," replied Mr. Steiner, furiously. "I knew it. But I'll block it. Don't you fear."

"I have ye foul, Mr. Steiner, and meant to when ye accused me of dishonest scheming; but I let ye ha' your own way. What d' ye say? Shall I take charge and save this barge?"

"Do as you like, I told you. If you can get this vessel back, do so. I will contest your claim for salvage in court."

"Then I'm in command the noo?"

"Yes, you're in command, if that's any satisfaction to you."

Scotty went below and entered his promotion in the log, locked it in the desk, and then returned to the owner.

"I've an entry in the log-book," he said, with the air of a judge, "which is legal testimony in court, Mr. Steiner, of every mistake ye've made since I told ye aboot the anchor. And it's under lock and key where ye'll no find it to destroy it. Ye may get off the deck and oot o' my way. If I need your sairvices

I'll put ye on the articles as ordinary seaman, and use you."

The owner stared with his watery eyes as Scotty began unbending the spanker; then, perhaps fearing a possible use made of him, entered the cabin. A little later, Scotty, desiring help in dragging the sail down off the poop, went after him, and found him smiling benignly at a newly opened bottle, and in the act of pouring a glass.

"Thought you'd hide it, didn't you?" he asked, as he glared triumphantly at his successor in command. "Well, I found it."

"And I'm a *damned* good mind to take it awa' from you," said Scotty, with a snort of disgust. "Did I e'en think ye'd be mair use sober than drunk, I'd do it; but go ahead—drink yerself stupid, and keep oot o' my sight."

He entered the owner's fresh misdoing in the log, and also the item that, alone and unaided, inspired by his own seamanly judgment, he was bending the only good sail on board as a mainsail, by which, as a balancing-sail, he hoped to make port in any wind or weather.

And this was the deep, dark scheme that had inspired the single-minded Scot since he had first blown away the jib—to allow the owner his own way until all canvas was gone but the brand-new spanker, and to then sail the barge in under this sail in a better place.

But, jubilant with success as he drove the owner

out of the cabin to assist in setting the sail when bent, he talked about it in a very un-Scotchman-like manner, and thoroughly impressed the befuddled man with the importance of that sail to Scotty in his scoundrelly salvage job. And so it transpired that, a few hours later, when Scotty, unable to keep his eyes open at the wheel, had called Mr. Steiner from his bottle, instructed him sufficiently, and left him to steer while he took a nap on the deck, the owner, at the first snore from Scotty, dropped the wheel, and, as the barge fell away, procured a can of oil, drenched the sail as high as he could reach, and touched it off with a match. The canvas was still too damp to burn past the oiled portion, but a hole was made, and the wind did the rest. If hot coppers are bad for the judgment, truly, whiskey is worse.

Scotty awakened four hours later to find nothing left but a bolt-rope fringed with streamers, and the barge rolling heavily in the trough, with the owner dead drunk in the cabin. Though the oil-can knocked about the scuppers, there was no sign nor smell of oil left, and Scotty saw nothing in the disaster but increased proof of the owner's inefficiency. So this interpretation alone went into the log-book, and the barratrous action of Mr. Steiner, which, if proved, might have materially helped Scotty's dark scheme, was lost to the evidence.

The wind was still brisk from the northeast, while the sea rolled on from the northwest. When Mr. Steiner had dropped the wheel, the barge, heading

off her course at the time, had swung still farther, and, presenting her stern to the wind instead of her bow, as before, wallowed along in the trough, yawing three points each way. She was safe enough, and when Scotty had lashed the wheel amidships he went down and stood over the owner, stretched out and snoring in an arm-chair at the table, the centre of an odorous radiation of whiskey fumes.

"Ye dog!" said Scotty, softly, but fiercely. "Ye ruinous, forsaken disgrace to your race — how'd ye ever come to own property wi' your habits. Ye're no' one o' the chosen people o' the Lord, I'll warrant. Ye're a lineeal desceendant o' one o' the lost tribes, maybe, but no true Israelite. Ye degenerate—ye revairsion to a forgotten past, get oot o' this cabin. Come, git oot!"

Mr. Steiner snored on, but made no articulate response; and Scotty, getting between his legs, seized an ankle in each hand and walked away with him. Mr. Steiner's head struck the floor, and for a moment he was awake, but the next was asleep again, and so he remained while Scotty dragged him out the forward door, along the deck, and into the galley. Here Scotty locked him in, after supplying him with a bucket of water and some hard bread from the forecastle.

"Ye're a prisoner on bread and water," he shouted at the prostrate figure, before closing the door. "For desairting the wheel at a creetical moment, ye shall

be locked up and eat the maggots ye provide for decent men."

He himself had subsisted on this fare since the trip began. He now returned to the cabin, entered up in the log the last happening to the owner, and ate a substantial lunch of cabin fare in the steward's storeroom. The whiskey he hid away; it was Kentucky rye, and he was a Scotchman.

Four hours' sleep is small recuperation after eighty hours of work. Scotty went on deck with a mattress, took a searching look around the empty horizon, and lay himself down beside the wheel, where he slept through the day and the following night, while the barge, under the lessening breeze, plunged along to the southward. At daylight he awakened and arose, conscious first of a rattling clamor from the galley, to which he paid no attention, next that the wind was almost gone, and then, as his glance wandered around, that there was something in sight—a craft of some kind, dead to leeward, and about five miles away. An inspection through the glass showed him a water-washed hulk, with nothing standing but a stump of mizzenmast.

"It 'll be a ship, I'm thinkin'," he muttered. "Yon seems to be a built mizzen, and the channels look long for a bark. A wooden ship—likely a Yankee."

Breakfasting hurriedly, he cleared away the wheel, steadied the barge for the wreck, and watched through the glass while she slowly drifted down before the light air still blowing from the northeast. But it was

three hours later before he could see with the naked eye what he had long seen with the glass—the occasional appearance at the taffrail, as though held at arm's-length in some one's hands, of an American ensign, union down.

"They're in sore trouble," he said to himself, "if they canna set it to the stump."

Soon he made out that all boats were smashed, both houses wrecked, bulwarks gone, that all the spars, with sails and gear, were washing alongside, and that the hull, though almost out of sight, so deep was it, seemed about the same tonnage as that of the barge.

"It's provedeential," said Scotty. "Gi'en that there's a crew in her to help, I can e'en make a square rigger o' this ballahoo, and go home in style. And if I save her spars to her owners, why, the mair saved the mair salvage. But I'll keep the dog locked up till the wark's done."

While he still had time he ran forward, leaving the barge to take her chance at keeping straight. And answering the owner's importuning through the galley window with a consignment to the lower regions, he coiled down on the forecastle-deck a mooring-line, made the lower end fast to the bitts, and passed the other through the chock and under the jib-guys, ready to heave to the stranger.

There was still too much of a sea rising and falling to make it practicable to lay alongside. His intention was to pass close to her stern, and hang her

to leeward of the deeper and more slowly drifting wreck. He accomplished it successfully. Steadying the barge to graze the stern of the other, he ran forward at the last minute, and bellowing, "Stand by for a line" to a hollow-eyed spectre whose head and shoulders rose over the taffrail, threw the mooring-line to him. The spectre seized it, stumbled towards the quarter-bitt, made it fast, and then fell to the deck. While Scotty paid out a few fathoms, to give room for the bowsprit, he noticed other prostrate forms scattered about, some of which gave no sign of life. Making fast, he climbed along the line to the wreck, and the spectre arose to his knees to receive him.

"Water—water," the spectre whispered, pointing to his mouth.

"Ay, ay—water is it? Water ye shall have," answered Scotty, one swift glance taking in the smashed tanks forward. He climbed back, secured a bucketful and a pannikin, and with some trouble managed to return along the line with the load.

"More, more," gasped the spectre in a stronger voice, when he had gulped down a cupful.

"Ay—all ye want. But let that soak in till I see the rest."

He found five dying wretches on the main-deck, and two dead. He went the rounds, giving each a drink, then back to the man on the poop, and down to the five. When the bucket was empty he secured another, then another and another, giving each all he

could drink; for he knew the physiological fact that, unlike hunger, thirst carries no danger of surfeit. When the spectre on the poop could speak articulately, he said:

"Yes, we're starving, too, but it was the thirst—the thirst—oh, the agony of thirst. A long passage —one hundred and ninety days from Hong-Kong. The water went low, and all the grub went bad or gave out before the leak. We pumped, but men can't pump when starving. I grant that. And it gained. Then the gale close to Sandy Hook! I had to run while we shortened down, and we brought by the lee and lost our spars and our deck-tanks. My mates and all my best men were up aloft, and went, too. These fellows left are landsmen—incompetent. They cannot even speak English."

"Can they wark?" inquired Scotty.

"Put a rope in their hands and they'll pull—that's all."

"That's enough for me. Gi'en that the weather keeps fair, I'll borrow your spars and make a ship o' that craft I'm in. But I'll get ye and your men aboard and feed ye first. What's wrong wi' your leg, cappen?" The captain had essayed to rise to his feet, only to fall back.

"I sprained my ankle. You'll need a chair for me. I don't know how the rest are."

The rest were able to move but not to stand; and, alone, and to the music of the owner's voice, Scotty rigged a trolley from the foremast of his own craft

to the mizzen of the other, slung the cabin arm-chair to it, and transshipped the six men, each of whom he had to lift into the chair, pull after him as he climbed along the line, and then lift out to the fore-castle-deck of the barge.

Then he carried them, one by one, down the steps and aft to the cabin, where he fed them scantily on such food as his common-sense suggested—rice-water at first, followed through the day by barley broth and canned oyster soup, all of which he prepared on the cabin stove, not caring to disturb his prisoner in the galley.

"What's going on out there?" asked Mr. Steiner, through the dead-light or round window, when Scotty was passing. "Why am I locked in here?" His tone was mild and respectful, and Scotty was moved to answer.

"You're locked up," he said, sternly, "for leaving your post o' duty to the destruction o' property, contrary to orders gi'en you by me, the lawful commander o' this craft."

"But I'm the owner of this craft. Let me out. I deprive you of command."

"You can't under the law till we get to port; and it's doon in the log that you promoted me to command. And as you're of a troublesome, dissatisfied disposeetion, ye'll stay locked up till I've earned the salvage I mean to gouge out o' ye, ye four-legged, whuskey-soddeu, unregenerate cheeld o' hell. Don't think I'll let ye on deck to enter a counter-claim

o' wark performed and direective superintendence offered. I've a job on hand beyond your powers. Stay there, and hush—damn ye!"

"I want something to eat," yelled Mr. Steiner, as Scotty moved away.

"Eat what ye've got. Ye bought it yourself, to be consumed in this end o' the ship."

Though not so emaciated as his men, which he frankly explained as due to his not sharing the last few morsels of food with them, Captain Boyd, of the sinking ship, was really in a bad way from his sprained ankle. He was unable to move without crutches, and as Scotty had none, nor time to make them, he put him to bed in the skipper's room, and carried the five living skeletons forward and put them in the forecastle-bunks. Then, visiting them all at intervals, with food and water, he worked at the task he had set for himself.

He judged that the wreck would not float many hours longer. He lowered the barge's one boat, and, equipping it with axe, top-mall, marline-spikes and coils of rope, disconnected the tangled wreckage from the ship's side, and, with the help of the capstan hauled it to the barge and moored it, more or less securely, before sundown of that day. He even, at Captain Boyd's request, secured her chronometer, compass, and log-book—which latter told him, for the first time, her name, the *Gladiator*, of Bath—and the captain's personal effects. He had neither light nor time to do more; for within ten minutes from his

casting off the mooring-line and jumping into the boat, the dismantled hulk gently settled beneath the surface and went down with hardly a flurry.

Mr. Steiner had continued his vociferations for something to eat, and, after he had fed his patients and himself, and sent up the riding-light, Scotty gave him some beans, pease, and salt pork of the forecastle stores, with instructions in cooking. Then, the night being fine, with no wind and little sea, he turned in, to dreamless sleep, for he was tired.

In the morning Captain Boyd asked his name, and then, addressing him as *Captain* McPherson, asked for crutches. Scotty, secretly pleased at the sound of the title, obliged him with two long swab-handles and some tools, and, while the captain littered the cabin floor with shavings and chips, resumed his work on the wreckage. Big and strong though he was, he could do little more than permanently secure it from going adrift or doing harm should the wind and sea rise; but that day he disconnected the broken lower masts from the topmasts—saving the fids, and hoisted on board the royal and topgallant-yards with the sails and gear. This material alone would have given him a jury-rig under which he could have made port; but Scotty, besides being a master seaman and mechanic, had an artistic love of a perfect piece of work, and, his enthusiasm now aroused, he planned to do as he had announced—make a square-rigged ship of the barge,

and take her in as such. Great would be the noise thereof, and great the salvage.

About mid-day Captain Boyd appeared on deck, limping around on his completed crutches, and for a time contributed fraternal and seamanly comments on the work; but, in his wanderings about the deck, he passed near to the galley window, and Scotty observed him in earnest conversation with the owner. Soon he appeared before Scotty with pain and indignation in his wasted face.

"I understand," he said, sternly, "that you are not captain of this craft, as you have represented."

"Ye understand wrong," replied Scotty, belaying the tackle he was hauling and facing him. "It's doon in the log that I'm in command."

"And is that the owner you've got locked in the galley?"

"It is—for wilfu' disobedience of orders and destruction o' property."

"That's not right. Let him out."

"Ay, and who says so?"

"I do. I am a ship-master, and know the right and wrong of things. He has described you — a foremast hand on this barge, who deliberately set her adrift. He has told me to take her in with my men when they can work, and to put you in your place—'fore the mast among them."

"Now, I'll tell ye, Captain Boyd," said Scotty, a dangerous light in his eye, "that if ye talk like that—"

He launched himself, head-first, at Captain Boyd; for the latter had drawn a bright revolver—Scotty had saved it for him—from his pocket. The impact knocked the captain off his crutches, and he floundered to the deck with a whinny of pain, while Scotty twisted the pistol from his weak fingers and pocketed it.

"Ye're too impulsive, Captain Boyd," said Scotty, looking down serenely on the chagrined skipper, "and too much impressed wi' the dignity o' your poseetion in the warld, and the halo o' diveenity that hedges aboot the rank o' captain. Not only that, but ye're impolite and ungrateful to the man that saved your life. Ye can't help the first, bein' a captain o' many years' standin', na doot; but for the last ye shall be locked up wi' the dog. Drop that crutch!"

The crutch he had regained was taken from him, and, protesting violently, Captain Boyd was dragged to the galley door, through which, when he had unlocked it, Scotty bundled him, with small regard for his injured ankle. Giving the obtruding Mr. Steiner a push which sent him reeling across the galley, he relocked the door; then, suggesting through the window that they be kind and brotherly, and that the captain teach Mr. Steiner the "musteries" of sea cookery, he entered up the log-book and resumed his labors.

With the small spars and sails on board with their gear, there was little more that he could do alone,

except to get mast ropes aloft and to compare the diameter of the barge's cap irons with that of the ship's topmast; but he did, on the following day, succeed in parbuckling the three topgallantmasts up to the rail, where he lashed and left them. This done, there remained nothing but to nurse his patients back to health and strength; and to this Scotty devoted himself assiduously, feeding, watering, and exercising the five in the forecastle as a farmer would his stock, but neglecting none the less the two in the galley, furnishing, besides food, liniment and bandages to the captain, and admonition and rebuke to both. Luckily, the weather remained fine, and the three topmasts and six heavy yards alongside did no damage to the barge. And while waiting, as the days wore on, he found that he could unship the caps, crosstrees and trestletrees from the topmasts while still in the water, and save valuable time later.

Mr. Steiner soon grew malignant to an extreme, shouting curses and obscenity at the big Scot through the window whenever he passed it. There was more of menace, however, in the silent dignity of Captain Boyd than in all this billingsgate, and even the steady soul of Scotty was moved by it. He offered to let him out on his promise of good behavior, but was not answered. So, needing the galley for cooking by this time, he transferred them to the carpenter-shop —which had windows, too—first removing all tools.

Yet there was no doubt of the gratitude of the five

men in the forecastle. They knew who had saved their lives, and they smiled and fawned on and followed Scotty about like dogs, grovelling at his feet when he spoke, and willingly offering assistance when yet barely able to stand. Lascars they were, small, brown, and withered at their best, quick and active in a warm climate, but stupid and dull in the chilly temperature of the North Atlantic.

Yet with this crew and the materials at hand Scotty rigged a ship.

It was a long and laborious task, with the capstan, tackles, and luffs, and Scotty did most of the work; but his strength was equal to that of any three of the five. They managed to get the spars and lower canvas on board while still the weather remained fine, and to send up and secure the maintopmast; but this done, a gale from the west forced a suspension of work for a week, and blew the craft a few hundred miles farther to sea. But with fine weather and a calm they got the fore and mizzen topmasts on end, stayed fore and aft, and the rigging set up to the tops. Then followed the yards—upper ones first, because of his small crew, though contrary to seamanship and the will of Providence; then the lower.

Little of the standing rigging was injured in the accident to the ship, carrying away, when the spars went over, at the lanyards or seizings, but nearly every rope of the running gear required splicing in some way, and this used up material. Long before the canvas was bent—a job hardest and heaviest of

all under the circumstances — the artistic soul of Scotty was grieved by the conviction that he could not send up topgallantmasts and upper-yards, after all. There was not rope enough to go around. So, content, perforce, with courses, lower and upper topsails, with a foretopmast-staysail forward, and a spanker cut down from the ship's main-spencer, Scotty shaped a course for Sandy Hook, chose a mate, and set the watches. She was a ship, assuredly, but without upper spars or jib-boom.

Every happening of the long, hard job had been entered in the log, and every bad word of the owner as well. His own state of health and being — his strenuous exertions and his fatigue, the number of hours he slept when work spared him and the number he remained awake when storm and stress required it—all went down to make his case of salvage good against Mr. Steiner. Captain Boyd's attitude, after the entry recording the deadly assault, was invariably described as "intractable," and that of the crew as "willing, but useless."

And so, fortified by his evidence, and his happiness clouded only by the inartistic hiatus aloft, Scotty sailed his first command up to the Sandy Hook channel-buoy, took a pilot, later a tug, and docked her at Tompkinsville with all the noise and eclat of a veteran commander, while from up and down the shores of Staten Island flocked those of the population that could be interested in the arrival of the well-known old *Champion* coming in with topmasts up

and yards crossed. Among them were some New York boarding-house runners, who, by methods known best to themselves, whisked Scotty's five Lascars from under his nose and over the side before he could stop them. Also in the crowd were two policemen, and these he beckoned aboard and forward to the carpenter-shop door. Flushed and elated, he would enforce his hard-earned power and prerogative to the last outpost. A large crowd, scenting excitement, followed.

"I've a couple o' prisoners inside," he said to the officers. "One o' them I mean to release, as I shall proceed against him in the ceevil courts; but the other I want you to arrest for drawing a gun on me in an argument ootside. It's all doon in the log."

"You're the captain, I suppose," said one of the policemen.

"I am—and that's doon in the log, too," said Scotty, unlocking the door.

Out sprang Mr. Steiner, dirty, dishevelled, and excited, but clear-eyed and coherent of thought, followed by Captain Boyd, who limped a little, but whose face, less emaciated now, showed none of the pain and indignation it had worn when Scotty had conquered him.

"That's the man," said Scotty, pointing to him. "Take him along, and I'll appear against him."

Captain Boyd smiled, but said nothing.

"Arrest that man, policemen," yelled Mr. Steiner,

springing to Scotty's side and seizing his arm. "I own this vessel. Arrest this mutineer."

"Be careful what you do without a warrant, officers," said Captain Boyd. "This trouble occurred on the high seas."

"What was the trouble, anyhow?" asked the officer.

"He pulled a gun to deprive me o' command after I'd saved his life," said Scotty, hotly. "Run him in. I'll prosecute."

"He stole my vessel," yelled the owner. "He's a pirate. He set her adrift so as to save her for salvage —to rob me of money under cover of the law."

"Both statements are more or less correct, officers," said Captain Boyd. "Still, it's best that you make no arrests without a warrant."

"That's right, I guess," replied the officer. "Go get your warrant and I'll pinch anybody named in it."

"But I'm master o' the ship," said Scotty. "I was put in command, and it's all doon in the log. And everything I've done was done as master, and it's all doon in the log. As master I'm a magistrate, wi' power o' impreesonment over all on board. I impreesoned that man for attempted assault, and I've the legal right to demand his arrest."

"Go get your warrant," replied the policeman, doggedly. "We saw nothing of all this."

"I'll get the warrant," said Mr. Steiner, moving away with a vengeful light in his eyes. "I'll do the prosecuting."

"Wait, Mr. Steiner," said Captain Boyd, with an amused expression of face, placing himself in the way and pushing him back. "Don't be rash, for this man has saved your property. Mr. McPherson," he said to Scotty, emphasizing the prefix to the name, "as an old man with a large experience in maritime law, I advise that you do not presume too much in port on a position technically given you at sea—on a promotion made under stress of fright and ignorance by a drunken ship-owner. I've questioned this man thoroughly, and know all your plans and schemes. You did right to slip the chain, but you should have beached the craft on Coney Island, even against his protest. You had the same right to overrule him as sailor as you had later when, technically in command, you had to imprison him. You had a right to imprison me, even as a shipped man, for as a member of her crew you ranked me—to use a military term—a stranger whose life you had saved. I acted hastily and unthinkingly, Mr. McPherson, and I apologize."

Captain Boyd extended his hand, which the open-mouthed Scotty took mechanically.

"And do ye mean to say," said he, "that I was no' bound to take his orders to keep off the bottom?"

"You were not. Your duty was to use your seaman's judgment to the best advantage. Any salvage judge would see at once that you were playing a game. You have not even deceived me, and I'm no lawyer. And that is not all. The joke is decidedly against you, even though you fooled everybody. For

you are not entitled to salvage, though you did all this work—and a fine job, too, I may say"—the captain glanced aloft, approvingly—"alone and unaided."

"I'm no' entitled to salvage?" exclaimed Scotty, in derision.

"You are not. As a member of this vessel's crew you have done no more than your duty, and are entitled, under the law, to no more than wages. Salvage is money paid to outsiders."

"Yah! yah!—ya-ha!" yelled Mr. Steiner, joyously, dancing up and down. "Do you hear that, you thieving scoundrel?"

"No' entitled to salvage?" repeated Scotty, unbelievingly, while Captain Boyd looked contemptuously at the dancing owner. "Then, in the name o' fair play and justice, who *wad* be entitled to it? I've saved property and I've saved life. I had the brain and the strength to do it when no one else had. No' entitled to salvage? Who wad be if I'm not?"

"You're not—you're not," chattered the owner. "Not a cent. I'll fight you in court. I told you I would."

"That raises another interesting point, Mr. McPherson," said the captain, dryly. "Had you not locked me up with a pig and fed me on swill, I would have enlightened you, for you saved my life, and after my resentment ended I was grateful. But it did no harm to show your seamanship, for I am a judge of it, and will sign you first mate at any time

I have a ship to sail. I know a good man when I see him at work."

"That's beside the point," said Scotty, angrily. "I want none o' your mate's berths. What's the point on your mind?"

"The point is, that if any salvage is paid for the fitting out of this barge with a jury-rig and bringing her to port, it will be paid to me and my five men, even though we owe our lives to the fact that this jeopardized property floated our way."

"Paid to you!" spluttered Mr. Steiner. "Not much. You did nothing."

"To me, my owners, and to my five Lascars, if they remain on shore to claim it," said the captain, calmly. "We were not members of the barge's crew, and we furnished the man-power and the material. Mr. Steiner," he added, looking the owner squarely in the face, "for being compelled to listen to your mouthings, and to endure your society for three long weeks, I shall reach for your heart's blood—your pocket. The salvage on this barge and cargo will amount, I should say, to about twenty thousand dollars. Are you insured?"

"No. I'm not," shouted Mr. Steiner. "But I won't pay it. Not much. Twenty thousand dollars to you for doing nothing. I'll fight you in court."

"Twenty thousand dollars," repeated Scotty, blankly. "And what do I get for twenty-five days o' man-killin' wark."

"Twenty-five days' pay," said Captain Boyd, with a smile. "What does that amount to?"

"Just aboot twenty dollars," answered Scotty, looking around with a face dark with passion. "But I get mair"—his voice became a roar—"I get one good knockdown for the job, damn ye!"

With two long steps he reached the owner's vicinity. Then he shot out his mighty fist—which seemed like a streak of brown in the air—full on the large nose of Mr. Steiner, who, clucking like a hen, went down in a heap and lay quiet, the proboscis smashed to a bleeding pulp. The crowd murmured its delight, and the two policemen, with drawn clubs, seized Scotty's arms, but he dragged them along with him to the prostrate form.

"Hold on!" they exclaimed, "don't hit him again. Come along with us, now, quietly, or you'll have trouble. We saw this, and we need no warrant. You'll get twenty days, too, for this."

"Wait, officers," said Captain Boyd, stepping forward. "Is it necessary to arrest him? He had strong provocation."

"Dry up!" bellowed Scotty, struggling in the policemen's grasp. "I want nane o' yer seempathy, an' if I get at ye, by the leevin' Gawd, I'll gi' ye one, too."

Captain Boyd stepped back and secured a belaying-pin; for Scotty's mighty strength promised to prevail over that of the policemen.

"Best take him along, officers," he said. "I'll appear and testify for him."

"Don't waste your time," answered one of them. "He's resisting officers in the discharge of their duty. Quiet, now, or you'll go in the wagon." He gave Scotty a tap on the head with his club which had the effect of dazing him. Dragging his feet painfully, he was led away through the crowd and over the rail as Mr. Steiner arose to his feet.

"I discharge you," he yelped, weakly, but viciously. "Get off my vessel. You are discharged."

And the next day he paid Scotty his twenty dollars as the latter received his sentence—twenty dollars fine *and* twenty days in jail, as the officer had predicted. Policemen know many things.

The Wave

SCOTTY strolled down to the dock and sat on a spile. He had no particular business there, aside from the business that every sailorman, out of a berth, out of money, and down to his final pipeful of tobacco, has near the shipping. Down-stream at another dock lay his last ship, the tow-barge *Champion*—from which berth he had retired in deep disgrace—with her consort, the *Anita;* and here at this dock lay the big ocean-tug which towed the two barges. Having been honored with a personal discharge from the owner himself, Scotty did not hope for a berth in any craft of the employ; but he yearned for sympathy and companionship, and he might have accepted an offer to work his passage to some other port in the stoke-hold of the tug, whose captain and crew he knew. As he smoked and brooded, Captain Anson of the tug came out of the engine-room and spied him. "Hello, Scotty!" he said, genially. "When did you get out?" Then he stepped over to the dock and joined him.

"This day, cappen," answered Scotty, rising and taking the extended hand. "I expect ye've made a couple o' trips since I was locked up."

"Yes, two. Twenty days you got, didn't you?"

"Ay, cappen," replied Scotty, sorrowfully. "Twenty days for tappin' a ship-owner on the nose. It's severe punishment. What 'd I ha' got if I'd tried to hurt him."

"A hemp necktie. Don't ever try to hurt anybody. Twenty days is little enough for the smash you gave his nose."

"I wadna mind the twenty days," said Scotty, sadly, "nor the shame o' the thing, but it was twenty dollars' fine, too, and it was all I'd airned on that last trip. Now, what 'll the poor mither do?" He took from his pocket a letter and handed it to the captain. "She says she'll be a charge on the town soon, if you don't help out. That's it, Scotty," said the captain when he had read.

"Ay, a charge—an object o' charity in her old age. It 'll kill her, cappen. I've sent her most o' my pay right along, but this business stopped it." There were tears in Scotty's eyes.

"I'd give you a berth, Scotty, only that I'd lose my own if I did."

"But could ye gi' me a passage, cappen, to Philly, where I can ship?"

"Yes, I will. Hang around, and sneak aboard at the last minute. But don't let him see you. I expect him down soon, as we make a start this after-

noon. Here he comes, though, and he's seen me talking to you. Too late now."

Scotty sat down on the spile again, and the captain climbed aboard the tug to receive the owner. Mr. Steiner came down the dock with a business-like stride, and a scowl on his face made more rigid and intense by crossing strips of adhesive plaster that almost covered his large nose. He passed Scotty without a glance at him, but when he had joined the captain aboard the tug he turned and shouted: "Here, you — McPherson, get away from here. You're up to some game, you scoundrel."

"Is this your dock, Mr. Steiner?" asked Scotty, mildly, removing his pipe for the speech.

"Get away, I say."

"Go ye to the de'il, ye bad example." Scotty still spoke mildly.

"If you don't take yourself off, you loafer, I'll direct Captain Anson to drive you. Understand?"

"Ay, I do; but Captain Anson won't do that."

"Won't he? Why won't he?"

"I won't let him."

Captain Anson grinned behind the owner.

"That's right, Mr. Steiner," he said, quietly. "Look at the size of him."

"Well, the police can do it. Police!" yelled the owner. "*Police!* POLICE! Here, boy," he said, addressing a near-by gamin, "go get two policemen, and I'll give you a—I'll give you five cents."

"Gi' him ten cents and get foor, Mr. Steiner," sug-

gested the unmoved Scotty. "It took twa when I smashed ye i' the nose, and I'd been lang on your fo'c'sle grub. Preeson fare is nourishin' by comparison, and I'm far strang-ger."

"Do you mean to assault me again?" inquired Mr. Steiner. He had stepped up on the rail to address the boy—who was now speeding on his mission—but at Scotty's words he stepped down hurriedly and got behind the captain. "I'll have you in jail again."

"Na, na, it 'd be a shame and a disgrace to hit ye, ye small-souled worker of ineequity; but I'll shut my hand on ye if ye don't use mair temperate language."

Scotty had lifted his six feet of bone and muscle upright, and now extended his hand—a mighty hand it was—towards the owner, opening and closing the fingers menacingly. Mr. Steiner was palpably alarmed, and retreated to the open door of the tug's dining-room. Close to this haven of refuge he was braver.

"Move on, now," he said to Scotty, with spirit. "Just go right on up the dock and keep out of trouble, you ruffianly jail-bird."

"Ye've a loose and careless tongue," answered Scotty, beginning to lose his temper, "in spite o' the lesson I taught ye. Take care, or I'll e'en come aboard your boat and teach ye again. I'm no jail-bird. Tharty years and mair I've travelled aboot this world, and niver was locked up till I hit ye."

"You are a jail-bird," called the owner, noting the point he had made. "And if you come aboard

this boat I'll jail you again. Don't you dare come aboard this boat, you rascally loafer."

"Ay," said Scotty, seating himself on the spile and smiling painfully. "I see your game, Mr. Steiner; but I've a mither to support, and I've lost time enough. Go on wi' your abuse."

"Get away from this boat," shouted Mr. Steiner. "You low-lived tough. Get away from here or I'll have you in jail under the habitual criminal law. I can jail you at any time under that law. You're an habitual criminal."

"D—n your heart and soul," yelled Scotty, rising from the spile. "You lie, d—n you; you lie. And who be you to call me that, you—you—d—d ship-owner. You're naught but a ship-owner."

As an adequate response to this insulting epithet, Mr. Steiner got inside the door, reached his head out, and said, "You're a Sawnee."

Sawnee Beane, the cave-dwelling cannibal, who with his numerous progeny enshrined his name and fame in Scottish history, is the one disgrace that a Scotchman will admit rests upon his native land. One who calls a Scot a Sawnee should be prepared to run, or fight, or intrench himself behind stone walls. Mr. Steiner was ill-prepared to do either, though he closed and locked the door.

With the roar of a bull Scotty cleared the rail, brushed Captain Anson aside, and pulled on the door-knob. It held, but the wood-work gave way

and he entered the dining-room, followed by the captain. Mr. Steiner was just opening the opposite door, and through this, and aft along the alley, Scotty pursued him. The captain glanced out at them, then hurried across to the other door to head off the animated tandem on the other side, while the engine-room staff appeared at the engine-room doors and the deck-crew came out of the forecastle.

Loudly yelling "police," Mr. Steiner raced forward, with Scotty, growling hoarse profanity, close in his rear. Captain Anson flung himself between them only to be knocked down by the impact of the big Scotchman's shoulders, and when he picked himself up he saw Scotty's heels disappearing around the forward corner of the house, and up the dock, coming at a run, three policemen and the gamin. Back through the dining-room went the captain, and this time he was more successful—he disturbed Scotty's headlong rush to the extent of crowding him half over the rail, and while the owner, still calling for the police, ran around the house, he and the engineer seized him. Then the deck-hands came aft to help.

"You confounded fool," said the captain, while Scotty struggled in their grasp, "do you want to go to jail again? He's got a sure case now. Think of your mother, you imbecile! Think of her!"

"Mither," repeated Scotty, looking at the captain helplessly, almost pathetically, like a frightened child. Most of his fury had passed from him with

the utterence of the word, and the rest was going. He trembled in every limb.

"Stand quiet," said the captain, sternly, "till I see where he is." He darted through the dining-room, peered out the door, and returned. "He's ashore with the coppers," he said, "and they're coming. Down in the stoke-hold, Scotty, and hide. Take care of him, chief," he said to the engineer. "We'll tell 'em he jumped overboard and swam under the dock. But it's all my job's worth if he finds it out."

In darkness and silence Scotty spent the next three hours seated on a coal pile far down below the deck. In this time not a word reached him from above, yet his trained apprehension took note of every move of the tug, in picking up her barges, by the sound of the engine-bells. He knew when she had stopped alongside the *Anita* to take her line to the *Champion;* he knew when the *Champion* had passed hers to the tug; he knew when it had straightened out, with tug in midstream and the first barge leaving the dock; he knew when the second barge was clear; and when he heard the "jingle-bell" he knew that the tow was heading down-stream, and that soon he would be called. He anticipated this by coming up and offering his services, but both mate and engineer declined them. Then he sought the crew; but they pressed upon him tobacco and oil-skins—for it was raining—telling him to loaf and enjoy himself. Then he sought the captain, to offer

apologies and thanks. He found him at the fantail inspecting a brand-new tow-line.

"It's a peach, Scotty, isn't it?" he said, in answer to Scotty's halting overtures, while he patted the bright, straw-colored rope, thirteen inches in circumference, and rigid as an iron bar. "He's a poor feeder, and won't insure, but he will furnish good, safe gear instead. Seems that nothing could part that big rope."

"And is he no' insured this trip?" inquired Scotty, embarrassed in his well-meant effort at thanks.

"Insured? No, not with this new tow-line, and brand-new canvas on the *Champion*. Looks fine, doesn't she?" He pointed to the *Champion*, heeling under the weight of three new mutton-leg sails and a jib.

"Does he know I'm aboard, cappen?"

"No," answered Captain Anson, looking him squarely in the eyes. "He thinks you're drowned, and is a little scared about it. They couldn't find you under the dock. It's up to you to ship for home and that old mother o' yours, and keep still about this."

"Ay, that I will, cappen. And I'm blamed sorry I lost my head; but he called me a Sawnee. I couldna stand it."

"I know," said the captain, with a grin. "But be satisfied that he said nothing about your mother. I was afraid he would when you lugged her into the conversation, but I s'pose he forgot to. He's the meanest man I know, Scotty. He beat that kid

out o' the nickel. But, just the same, I had to stop the circus; he's the owner."

That night Captain Anson tested the new tow-line. The wind had been strong from the east when he started, and he had expected that it would moderate and come more from the northward, so had not made the offing that he would had he been a better prophet. Before eight bells that evening it was blowing a gale, and he headed out to sea a little to allow for leeway; then, in the middle of the night, the wind hauled to the southeast, heading him still more, and blowing harder, and his problem of navigation was reduced to steaming head to wind and sea in the effort to keep off a lee shore, with judicious attention to the effect of wind and sea upon the helpless barges in his care. He had seen with the night-glass that they had taken in the now useless canvas, and he went aft to the fantail to watch the straining of the tow-line. Scotty went with him, but the rest of the crew were under cover —those off duty in their bunks, the engineer and his men in the engine-room, and the mate in the pilot-house with the helmsman. The powerful and high-sided tug was making good weather of it, though steaming at full speed into combers that met her at fifteen feet a second. She occasionally spooned up a green sea, of course, and the air above her deck was continually filled with a horizontal and liquid blast that stung the face like needles, while the hum of the engines and the rush of wind and water made even

thinking rather difficult. But there was nothing alarming in all this; they were making headway over the bottom. The unsolved part of the problem was the condition of the barges and the strength of the weaker links in the chain — tow-lines and bitts. Far astern the red and green lights of the *Champion* twinkled in the darkness, and now and then, as she yawed and brought them in sight, those of the *Anita* behind her. Occasionally they were obscured by the uplifting head of a sea that had passed the tug. Captain Anson clambered aft and gauged with his hand the stretch of the line from bitts to taffrail as it grated back and forth over the smooth wood.

"A new line ought never to be stretched more than six inches to a fathom," he shouted in Scotty's ear when he returned. "It kills it, and the next strain parts it. I'm going to slow down."

He moved towards the bell-pull in the after-end of the house, but then, as though deciding to inform the engineer by word of mouth, passed on to the engine-room door. Scotty, bowing to the blast, saw him enter the engine-room, and then heard faintly from within the sound of a bell.

"One bell," he muttered. "That's to slow down; but why does he go below to ring bells."

Another stroke of the bell came to him, then two more in quick succession.

"The stoppin' and backin' bells!" he exclaimed. "What's up?"

An indistinguishable cry, containing, however, a note of warning, came out of the darkness forward, then the slamming of a door. He looked, as he could, against the pelting rain and spume, and saw a high wall of blacker darkness lifting up ahead. The next instant the tug stood on her tail. And even as he slid, blindly groping for support, towards the taffrail, Scotty felt the vibration of the reversed engine in the deck. Then he was struck by an avalanche of water that lifted him clear of everything, buried him, and swept him away. Choking for air in the black envelope surrounding him, he yet knew that he was overboard, and with presence of mind borne of large experience, he kicked off his rubber boots, and struggled with his last remnants of strength with the buttons of his oil-skins. Soon he was free of these, and he swam, with the unerring instinct of a dying animal seeking life, upward—towards the air that he needed. He shot head and shoulders out, and as he plunged back a breaking sea submerged him still farther; but he had obtained one good mouthful of air, and it sufficed until he again came to the surface, when he paddled, rested, and breathed.

He could see nothing of the tug nor her lights. They were extinguished, no doubt, by the terrible tidal-wave that had struck her. Then it came to him that a wave that could reach up to the mast-head lights would leave but little of the tug. It would crush in her house and her deck, beat her

down, fill her, and sink her. All hands were below at the time; they had gone down with her. Of all that crew of friendly men there was not one alive to know of his predicament and to help him. He turned and swam to leeward, now looking for lights or shadowy shapes of the barges as the seas lifted him, holding his breath as they broke over him—shouting, shouting, hailing for help.

There came a thought to cheer him. They had been well within the hundred-fathom curve. The tow-line was new, securely fastened to the bitts of both craft, and ninety fathoms long. If it had not parted as the wall of water struck the *Champion*, and she still floated, she was riding to it, with the tug for an anchor—stationary, but far away. Of course he could not see her; she was nearly ninety fathoms to leeward, and her lights must be out. He swam with redoubled vigor, breasting the sea with long, powerful strokes, and making actual progress, through that angry turmoil, of two feet a second. His mind, supremely active from the peril, reduced fathoms to feet and speed to minutes. If the *Champion* still floated, anchored to the sunken tug, he should reach her in twenty minutes; if she was drifting, his battle would be longer. He began counting his strokes.

Twenty minutes passed by his calculation, and still he stared at blank darkness, unrelieved by aught but the phosphorescent gleam of breaking seas; then twenty-five, then thirty, and the strong,

desperate swimmer was about to give up, when he made out a cluster, or centralization, of the phosphorescent gleams far ahead and a little to the right. He swam towards it, abating nothing of the furious energy of his strokes, and soon distinguished a vague shape above them. It was one of the barges, adrift in the trough, and it was the wash of the sea along her side that had lighted the way to her. "God be thankit," he groaned, hoarsely, then shouted: "Barge, ahoy — ahoy! On board the barge! Man overboard!"

There was no answering shout, and, saving his breath, he swam on. Soon he could see that she lay stern towards him, and he knew by the shape of the stern that it was the *Champion*. And he knew that there was nothing fixed or pendant to which he could cling, or by which he could climb, nearer than the bob-stays at the other end of her. And towards this end he swam, shouting occasionally, but getting no answer. There was not a light showing; all hands were below, no doubt. Of what need were lights and lookout on such a night as this. He swam under the bowsprit, watched his chance as the barge buried her bow, and, seizing the chain bobstays as high as he could, was lifted up as she rose. Once before he had done this trick, and he knew better how to do it now. He was doused but twice, and then reached the bowsprit, where he clung for breath a scant moment before scrambling inboard. His movement from the knight-heads to the break of the forecastle-

deck was on hands and knees, and his descent of the steps a headlong lurch.

An hour later he wakened from the swoon, and with every bone and joint in his body aching from the violent strain put upon them, made his way towards the forecastle door. He found a misshapen pile of wreckage in place of the forward-house. Feeling his way aft in the darkness, calling out as he went, he came upon the midship-capstan rolling about in the port scuppers. Ropes washed from the pins and capstan-bars from the racks littered the deck. The poop-steps were gone, and the forward side of the cabin was crushed in, but he shouted in through the apertures before mounting the sacred poop-deck. Going aft he found the wheel and binnacle intact; but the lights were out, and the green and red lights on the quarter, screens and all, were gone, while the boat had been torn from the davits at the stern. The *Anita's* steel-wire tow-line hung up and down from the chock in the taffrail, proving its disconnection from the *Anita*, and on going forward again Scotty found that the brand-new manila tow-line that Captain Anson had been so proud of had parted at the bitts. The force of the wave that had swamped a tug, swept a deck of fittings and crew, and parted that big rope must have been terrific, but could best be indicated by the capstan rolling in the scuppers. Worn out in body and mind, Scotty crept beneath the forecastle-deck and went to sleep. He had saved his own life, but

had not strength to speculate on the fate of others. It was high noon when he aroused himself, and, stiff and sore, crawled out to the dismantled and deserted deck. The wind still blew briskly from the southeast, and the barge still wallowed in the trough of a sea that showed an occasional comber, but the gale was over. Seaman-like, Scotty's first look was aloft, and he noted with gratification that the three new mutton-leg sails, brailed in to the masts, and the furled jib on the bowsprit, seemed uninjured by the wash of water, though sagging baglike in their fastenings. They had stretched and given to the blow, unlike the rigid capstan that had resisted. Before going further, he lashed this rolling mass of iron securely to a ring-bolt, where it could do no harm. He inspected the interior of the wrecked forward-house. No one, living or dead, was in the fore-castle, carpenter-shop, or galley, and he surmised by the condition of loose articles that the barge, too, had stood on end when the sea struck. He found the cabin deserted, and every apartment and state-room in it more or less drenched and upset. He filled his empty stomach with good cabin food from the store-room, then, securing the skipper's binoculars, he climbed to the poop by the after-companion and searched the horizon. Off the north and west were a few sailing craft, and to the south the smoke of a steamer—all too far away for signalling. Directly to windward, rising and falling in the trough, about a mile away, was a craft that at first glance looked

like a house-boat adrift, but which, after a keen scrutiny, Scotty knew for the tug—low in the water, and minus her funnel. But there was no sign of the *Anita*, unless she was one of the craft on the horizon making port under sail.

A six-foot able seaman may do some heavy work with purchases. With the aid of a watch-tackle, Scotty set the three mutton-legs and the jib. The mutton-legs had booms, which would swing free for either tack, but the jib, inasmuch as he could not attend to it when wearing ship, as he would need to in that sea, he trimmed down amidships with both sheets, making of it a good balancing sail, but depriving it of driving power. Then he began a beat to windward, and three hours later, by the simple operation of hauling aft his spanker-sheet as he luffed, hove the barge to under the lee of the tug, and within hailing distance.

"Hallo-o-o-o, Scotty," came Captain Anson's voice from the bridge, where he stood, looking through his glasses. "How'd you get there? You're born to be hung, you Scotchman. Are you alone?"

"Ay, all alone. All hands washed off, I s'pose. I swum it."

A spontaneous cheer—each man for himself—had arisen from the tug's crew when the captain had hailed Scotty by name, but his answer silenced it.

"What's wrong wi' ye?" asked Scotty, at length.

"Half full o' water, boat and funnel gone, pumps

out o' gear, and the tow-line fouled up in the screw. We were backing, and backed over it."

"Ay, I remember the bells. What aboot the *Anita*, seen her?"

"Saw her makin' for port early this morning. Couldn't see us, I suppose, and expected you to follow."

"Well, what's to be done, cappen? If I had your line I could tow you in wi' this good fair wind. How can I get it?"

"I can float a heavin'-line down to you on a fender."

"Ay, but if I could get it I couldna get the tow-line up, and steer, and handle sail at the same time. S'pose you try to get the *Anita's* line here" — he indicated the dragging steel-wire rope hanging from the taffrail. "You've got the men."

"How long is it, Scotty?"

"Don't know, but I'll tell ye what. I'll fill away, and come back nearer to ye and headin' your way. Throw me a heavin'-line as I pass, and I'll make a bow-line on the line, and you can get the bight. I'll luff around ye, and if it's lang enough, make it fast to your nigger-head forrard, and I'll fill away."

"Good enough, Scotty. Go ahead."

Scotty let fly his spanker-sheet, and the barge, falling off, gathered way. He made a long-board to the northeast until he judged that he had the weather-gauge, then wore ship and came back with a "good full," steering so as to pass close

under the lee of the tug, whose head lay to the southwest. It was really an easy job; the *Champion* was an old half-clipper, clean-lined, not too deep-laden for good steering, and under just about the right amount of canvas for the wind that blew. Scotty caught the heaving-line as it whirled over his head, hurriedly cast a running bow-line (a slip-noose) about the dragging tow-line, and as the tug men pulled, ground the wheel down and luffed around the *Proserpine's* bow. The barge lost way as her canvas rattled in the wind, and, as he could not now depend upon steerageway, he ran forward, ready to manipulate the jib should she fall off to port and threaten to drift down upon the tug. But this did not happen; she lay steady, head to wind, and soon began making sternway. Then, as she slowly sagged back and brought the *Proserpine* abeam, a shout went up from the tug, and he saw that they had the end, and were taking it forward to the nigger-head, or mooring-bitt, in the bow. He hauled the jib to port, and, running aft, slacked off the spanker and took the wheel. It took ten minutes after the line had tautened for the barge to straighten around with such a drag on her stern, but as she slowly forged ahead her rudder helped, and soon she was before the wind. Then Scotty slacked off the sheets and took the wheel again. When darkness closed down he picked up the revolving search-light on Navesink Highlands, and, later, Sandy Hook Light. He did not stop for a

pilot at the Light-ship; he could not have stopped had he wished to. For the wind had again become a gale, and his sails were jibing from side to side as the barge yawed, necessitating his whole attention to the steering. But he knew the way in, and once in the Swash Channel, and past the dangerous Romer Shoal, he took advantage of a smooth time and clear track, and, by a mighty effort of his great strength, succeeded in brailing in the spanker. Then, resting as he steered, he sailed into the comparatively smooth water of Gravesend Bay, and here he took in the mainsail—the dragging weight of the tug keeping the barge fairly on her course while he worked. Passing craft hailed him, and a belated tug or two crept up alongside, offering assistance, but he discouraged all overtures. He had conquered the wind and the sea; he had mastered the spanker and the mainsail, and was presumably equal to the foresail and the jib. There was still the unsolved problem of the anchor; but if he could not pry it off the rail he could beach the barge to the north of the anchorage at Tompkinsville. Simple-minded though he was, he would have been less than Scotch had he not been impressed with the legal possibilities of the situation.

In the Narrows he took in the foresail, and made a hurried inspection of the big anchor. It had been "fished," but not stowed inboard; it hung by its ring-stopper and the corner of its upper fluke, the latter resting in a grooved casting on the rail from which it would slide when the former was slipped.

Shouting joyously, he again took the wheel, and steered the drifting craft up to the crowded anchorage, where, picking a good spot, he unlocked the windlass, dropped the anchor, and gave her chain. When the anchor bit and enough was out, he stowed the jib, saw that the tug was anchored, hailed her and cast off the wire tow-line with a fender for a buoy, ate some supper, and turned in.

In the morning when he appeared on deck he found a gray gale of wind blowing from the northeast, and the barge, with every craft at the anchorage, tailing inshore against the pressure of the ebb-tide. Among these craft he recognized the missing *Anita*, and as he looked a boat left her side, propelled by four oars, and containing three men in the stern, who, as it drew near, he recognized as Captain Anson, Captain Bolt, of the *Anita*, and Mr. Steiner, the owner. He took and secured the painter as it was thrown up, then assisted them over the rail. Captain Anson immediately seized his hand, gripped it fiercely, but said nothing. Captain Bolt did the same, but uttered the words, "Good for you, Scotty." Then Mr. Steiner, smiling painfully under his bandaged nose, offered his hand (which Scotty politely received) and said, in a strained voice, as though the speech cost an effort, "I hear some very good things of you, Mr. McPherson."

"Ay, and is that so, Mr. Steiner?" asked Scotty.

"Ya-as. I hear that you swam from my tug to my barge and saved your life; but you would have

been drowned, wouldn't you, if my barge had not been right there?"

"And if he hadn't been right there, Mr. Steiner," broke in Captain Anson, warmly, "your barge and your tug would be going to pieces on the beach now."

"Yes — yes," said the owner, hurriedly. "We needn't discuss that any more. Of course, Mr. McPherson, you will admit that you had no business on my tug—that your peril arose from your being there, and that the providential proximity of the *Champion* was your salvation."

"Ay, I suppose so," replied the nonplussed Scotty. "I couldn't ha' swum much lang-ger."

"Hush, you weak-minded H*ee*ghlander," said Captain Anson, quickly. "You were not a member of the barge's crew, and you were not one of my men, and have saved both craft. Don't spoil your case."

"Well, I've a counter-claim for saving his life," spluttered the owner, the smile on his face giving way to the easier scowl. "You're not working for my interest, Captain Anson."

"You forget, Mr. Steiner, that you discharged me half an hour ago, and have not reinstated me."

"And I won't," answered the owner, bitterly—"either one of you."

"Very well. Then Bolt and I will be witnesses for Scotty. His presence on the tug did not bring about the peril to himself or to your property; it was the tidal-wave, and Bolt knows what it was."

"That I do," said the other skipper. "Nothing

could stand before it. The tow-line snapped like a thread, and we nearly turned a somersault."

"Well, what do you want?" inquired Mr. Steiner, patting the air with both hands in his agitation. "You are all against me—three against one. You are trying to ruin me, and I am a poor man already. Father in heaven, how much do you want?"

"Want my tug back and a two years' contract. I've a family."

"Same here," said Captain Bolt. "My barge and a contract."

"And you," said the owner, glaring at Scotty.

"He wants the salvage on the *Champion* and the tug," said Captain Anson, speaking for him, "less the possible expenses of a suit, which might as well stay in your pockets as go to the lawyers. And he wants a two years' contract as skipper o' the *Champion*. She's lost all hands, and you'll need a skipper anyhow."

"Stick to the point. How much do you want to sign a quit-claim on salvage?" said the owner, desperately.

"Let's see what he wants," said the tug captain, making figures in a note-book, while Scotty looked on in sheer bewilderment. "Salvage, Mr. Steiner," added the captain, when he had finished, and closed the note-book, "is usually a third of the property saved when the case is as clear as this. You know the market value of your tug and barge, and there would be a couple of thousand bilked by the lawyers,

which I have deducted. Got your check-book with you?"

"Yes, but wait—"

"Got your receipt-book?"

"Yes, I have," answered the distracted Mr. Steiner. "But I will not do business here. This is no place. I must see my lawyer."

"You can see him later. Make out a check to Scotty for this amount"—he opened the note-book before the owner's face—"and a receipt for the same, which Scotty will sign, and give us our contracts, on any old paper we find below, and it's all off, Mr. Steiner. Otherwise we'll see a lawyer—our lawyer."

"No," shrieked the owner, as he looked at the figures, "I will not. It is robbery—robbery—pure and simple. I will not. I will fight you in the courts."

"All right. Come on, Bolt. Come on, Scotty. I know a good lawyer ashore."

They moved towards the rail, and Captain Anson had descended to the boat when the owner spoke again. And he spoke in accents of grief and rage, with tears trickling from his eyes down over the bandages on his nose.

"Wait. I cannot afford publicity. It is pure robbery," said the owner, brokenly; "and I am a ruined man, but I must pay. I will give you your contracts."

"I see," said the captain, climbing back. "Publicity is bad, sometimes — for bankrupts. You

shouldn't do business under your own name, Mr. Steiner. Captain McPherson," he said, gravely and politely, to Scotty, "will you invite us down into your cabin?"

"Ay. But what does it all amount to?" said Scotty, as he looked at the retreating figure of the owner making aft. "How much do I get? Enough to help oot the old mither?"

Captain Anson opened the note-book and pointed to the page on which he had made his calculations. "How many hours did you work?" he asked.

"Aboot twenty-four, counting the swim," said Scotty; then he read, with popping eyes, the figures indicated by the captain's forefinger.

"I'm going to send you a bill for the door you smashed, Scotty," said the captain, with a smile. "But aren't you glad you didn't catch him? Your bill is a thousand an hour."

"Twinty-foor thousand dollars!" said Scotty, his eyes devouring the page. Then came, in a choking gasp, the word "Mither."

The Cook and the Captain

WE had towed down nearly to Sandy Hook before the steward, who had been busy in the cabin, discovered that his subordinate, the ship's cook, had deserted at the dock, leaving an important incumbency unfilled. As Captain Sutherland informed me, a ship can go to sea without a mate or a skipper, but not without a cook; so it was manifestly necessary that we wait at anchor in the Horseshoe while he went back in the tug for another.

He was like the ship he commanded—tall and well-proportioned. He had a full, blond beard and a shock of thick, flaxen hair; he had a voice to waken the dead and an eye that was hard to meet (it seemed to search into you—to hunt down and nail the lie you had not meant to tell); he was taciturn, but not ill-tempered, gentlemanly, of good address when he spoke, well-read, and educated far above the requirements of seafaring — his education, it seemed, stopping only at the languages, an attempt to learn Norwegian, the tongue of his viking ancestry, as he informed me in our first interview, having signally

failed. For the rest, he was an American, and as he stepped down the side-ladder to the tug, clad in a sober business suit of gray, he looked like nothing so much as a prosperous manufacturer. His first mate resembled him in size, noisiness, and professional efficiency, but differed from him in everything else. Mr. Rollins, when sober, was a capable first officer, but, drunk or sober, a brute—a "bucko," as sailors call his kind. He had offered to go up instead of the captain to ship the new cook.

"No, Mr. Rollins," said the captain, gravely. "I'd only have to follow and look for you. Besides, I've other business to attend to that I'd forgotten. This will allow me to close it up. If I don't come down with the cook in the tug, I'll come down later by rail, and hail you from the government dock inshore. Watch out for me."

"Curious man doctor," said the mate to me, as the tug steamed away. "This is my third v'yage with him, and I've never seen the inside o' the after-cabin."

"Why, is it usual," I asked, idly—I did not like the fellow, but could not decline his society—"for officers to have the run of the captain's apartments?"

"No," he answered, "not the run of them; but he won't be called in bad weather. That's his bargain with me—that I'm to be competent to shorten sail and take care o' the ship without him. I'm that, all right, but skippers are usually overanxious. This one won't come on deck till he wants to, and I've

seen her hove down in a China typhoon, and him below. He sleeps daytimes a good deal, and noses round deck nights. 'Nother rule is, and I'll give it to you: Don't tramp over his head, starboard side aft."

I thanked him for the information and left him; for it had begun to rain, and as I was an invalid physician, taking a sea-voyage on my own prescription, I knew my room was the best place for me. It was off the dining-room, in the forward cabin, and I remained in it through that night and the following forenoon, nursing my rheumatism, and listening to the sound of rain increasing to the sound of storm, which by mid-day had become a gale from the west. Over the steady song of the wind arose at intervals the louder roar of the mate on deck, cursing and berating the men in the pleasant task of breaking them in to his ways, and late in the afternoon a change of cadence in the roaring tones brought me on deck. The tug was coming, a dim shape on the port quarter, barely outlined in the smudge of rain and spoondrift. Along the rail were perched men with fenders, and forward on the forecastle-deck Mr. Rollins was overseeing the job, and again bawling profanity at the men. Here he remained while a big, blond, limp, and unsteady man in a gray business suit was assisted up the side amidships, and hurried into the galley by the waiting steward. Then Mr. Rollins came aft, peeping into the galley on the way, and joined me on the poop.

"Did the skipper come aft?" he inquired.

"No, if that was him. The steward seems to be taking good care of him."

"Hell of a how-de-do," he grunted, disgustedly. "Wouldn't trust me to—" The rest was lost as he walked away; but I sensed it, and while I shared the captain's distrust of him, I also shared his disgust for the captain. A drinking officer may be kept sober at sea. Not so a captain.

A man had climbed aboard, and now mounted the poop-steps and accosted Mr. Rollins.

"You're der mate, ain't you?" he asked, producing a couple of documents. "Yoost sign dis receipt for der cook—and here's der ship's articles der skipper gi' me." Mr. Rollins took the papers.

"Sign for the cook?" he said. "Where is he?"

"Yoost passed him up. I'm der shippin'-master dat shipped der crew, and der skipper was busy this morning—yoost gi' me der articles and told me to sign and bring down a cook."

"This is the articles all right," said the mate, scanning the papers, "and this is a receipt for one Lars Hansen, cook. But you passed up the skipper, not a cook."

"No," said the shipping-master, earnestly. "He looks like der skipper, but he's a Norwegian, like me, and a cook. He didn't come out o' der same house as der rest, but I shipped him 'fore der commissioner."

"I say, mate," called the tug captain from his

pilot-house. "Going out with this good fair wind, or will you wait till he sobers up?"

"Who'd you bring down," asked the mate—"Captain Sutherland or a cook?"

"Both, didn't I? Skipper full as a goat, and the cook takin' care of him."

"This fellow's a crimp. Didn't you bring a cook?"

"Not unless he's one. I thought he was the cook we went for."

"Get off this poop," roared the angry officer. "Get over the side, blast you. This beats all my time—shanghain' a skipper aboard of his own ship as cook. Get aboard that tug."

The mate pushed the shipping-master, threatened with his big fist, silenced his protesting voice in a torrent of profane abuse, and bore him along by the very force of his masterful personality to the poop-steps, down which he followed him, still threatening and cursing him. The shipping-master, dazed by the outpouring of wrath, sped to the rail and mounted it, chagrin and astonishment showing on his dull, flat face.

"By der living Gawd," he cried, "I'll fix you for this. What der hell's der matter wi' you—hey? You're crazy-house."

Mr. Rollins threw a belaying-pin at him, and he dropped down to the tug, where I heard him in angry altercation with the tug captain. I was unused to such scenes, and left the deck, but I could hear through my state-room window the voice of the mate

directing the tug captain to hang on alongside until the captain came on deck or a cook came down, and the tug captain's protest that there would be a bill of demurrage against the owners for the delay.

At a late supper the mate facetiously asked the overworked steward how the patient was getting on, and the tired man answered: "Drunk still, or doped —stretched out like a log in the cook's room. I can't get a word out of him, sir. I wish he'd wake up and do something. I can't stand this much longer."

"Yes, steward," answered the mate. "But you know his rule—that he's not to be called. You did right to get him out of sight of the men, though. Let him take his time."

The steward opened his eyes and looked curiously at him, but said nothing, and soon left the cabin.

"If he's doped, Mr. Rollins," I ventured, "I think we ought to look at him."

"We will, after supper," he responded.

We did so. The steward, busy with a pile of pots and pans, received us at the galley door, and pointed in through another to where, on a berth in a small, adjoining room, lay the big, gray-clad figure that had come on board. We entered and stood by the berth. The gray suit was soiled and disfigured, the linen filthy, the breath reeking of whiskey; but there was no dilation to the pupils of the eyes—nothing abnormal in the regular breathing. It was Captain Sutherland, or his double, disgracefully drunk, but not drugged.

"I wish he'd wake up and help," said the steward, drying a huge pot with a cloth. "I'm all tired out."

"Help?" said the mate, looking round at him. "Why, it's the skipper."

"No, Mr. Rollins," answered the steward, earnestly. "I thought so when he came aboard, but this fellow can't speak English."

"Too drunk, you blamed fool," said the mate, contemptuously. "Don't you s'pose I know the skipper after two v'yages—and the clothes he wears? Why, I know the place he bought that suit in Liverpool. See the English cut to the lapels?"

"You're mistaken, sir," protested the steward, backing into the galley with his pot. "That's a Sou'wegian, the dead image of Captain Sutherland, I know; but he's a cook. Why, drunk as he was, he knew where the cook's berth was, and floundered right into it."

"If I didn't know," said the mate, eying him sternly, "that you're a fool, and an honest man as fools go, I'd think you were in cahoots with that crimp. Let's get out o' here, doctor. Let him sleep, steward," he said, as we left.

Obviously, with the captain returned, drunk, and without a cook, nothing could be done; so Mr. Rollins set the anchor-watch with no reference to the dock inshore, and one result of this was that the steward wakened me about midnight by passing my door from the after-cabin to the forward passage, and chuckling audibly, "Who's the fool now?" Then I

heard him waken Mr. Rollins, whose room was on the port side of this passage, telling him that the captain wanted to see him in the dining-room. They both entered at about the same moment, and, as my door was partly ajar, I took note of the captain. His face was clean, his eye clear, and his clothing a dark-blue pea-jacket and trousers of pilot-cloth or beaver.

"Is the ship ready for sea, Mr. Rollins?" he inquired, gravely, when the mate had rubbed the sleep out of his eyes.

"Yes, sir—all but the cook. Has he come?"

"How do I know?" said the captain, impatiently. "I have just come off in a shore-boat, finding my hail unanswered; but the steward says he is come. Is there no anchor-watch here?"

"Yes—yes, sir," stammered the astonished Mr. Rollins. "The cook came this afternoon, but—but, I was waiting—for you—for the cook to—"

"Wake up," interrupted Captain Sutherland. "Take the ship to sea. You know better than to wait for orders. I thought you knew my ways."

"Very good, sir," said the mate, humbly, as he turned away.

Both left the dining-room by opposite doors, and I rolled over in my berth, too content with its warmth to go on deck in the cold and rain to witness the getting under way of the big ship. But I heard most of the operation, beginning with a noisy dialogue between the mate and the tug captain, in which the former averred that he never saw such a "hell-fired

resemblance" in his life, and which he concluded by a request to send "that damned, hell-fired, four-legged Sou'wegian son of a ship-owner aboard, and he'd sign his receipt for the cook." Then followed the clank of the windlass, the trampling of feet, the formless calls of sailors, the oaths and orders of the officers, the rattling of blocks and canvas, the swish and crash of water alongside, then quiet—and sleep.

I was up at daylight; the watch on deck was washing down under the second mate; the steward, more tired and anxious-looking than ever, was flitting back and forth between cabin and galley; and forward near the fore-hatch the new cook was sawing wood.

"He seems to be some kind of a cook," said the steward, when I had inquired about his assistant, "but he can't talk English. I don't know what I'm to do."

I strolled forward and inspected the cook. He smiled vacantly as I halted before him, but went on with his task, singing to himself a rollicking melody which occasionally broke into a refrain in English. It was laugh-compelling, the way the words rolled out, and the meaning they had—something about two old ladies gossiping, and at every second line indulging in the refrain, as follows:

"Goodness gracious, gracious goodness, goodness gracious, gracious me."

I spoke to him, but he protested by signs that he did not understand. I knew that it is not difficult to

learn and sing a song in a strange language, so I took no account of this. Though physically—that is, in height, figure, color of hair and eyes, shape and fixed expression of the features—he was the exact counterpart of Captain Sutherland, here resemblance ended. There was no intellect, no soul, showing in that vacant expression of face and eyes. He was an animate clod—a human brute barely removed from idiocy; there was nothing in common between him and the intelligent Captain Sutherland but physique and his parrot-like rendering of a song. Yes, there was one other point of resemblance. The gray suit was discarded and he was in his shirt-sleeves—very dirty they were, too—but he wore dark-blue pilot-cloth trousers.

As I turned away, Mr. Rollins, just out of his berth, came forward. He halted before the cook and the pile of wood resting upon the unprotected deck, and turned loose a torrent of profane objurgation, the burden of which was his disapproval of men who knew no more than to scar up a good deck with newly sawed wood. The cook stopped singing, stopped working, and looked at him in stupid bewilderment; and as he did not immediately respond to the suggestion to pile the wood on the hatch, Mr. Rollins promptly seized the end of a rope, whirled it around, and struck him on the face with it. Still he did not understand, and he received another blow that nearly knocked him down. The cook whimpered in pain, shielding his face with his arms; but

there was no resentment in the dull, expressionless features, and, understanding at last, more by the mate's gestures than his words, he began piling the wood. I was a passenger, and, though disgusted with the mate's brutality, I could not interfere in anything concerning the management of the crew; but I determined, as I went aft, that Captain Sutherland should at least know of the proceeding, when he could take such action as he saw fit. However, I soon forgot the cook and everything else but myself and the misery of sea-sickness; for as the ship left the lee of the land the seas rose, and as it still blew half a gale, these seas tossed the big vessel about in a manner that sent me to my berth. It was well on towards six bells of the first watch—eleven in the evening—before I again sought the deck, when I found a quiet scene—the sea comparatively smooth, a gentle breeze bellying the canvas, and the ship riding gently along with a full moon hanging over the port foreyard-arm. Forward the watch paced up and down, or sat about in coils of rope hanging from the pins; Mr. Rollins stood by the break of the poop, and aft, near the man at the wheel, Captain Sutherland leaned against the house, gazing thoughtfully over the sea. When he spied me he beckoned, and I joined him, noticing that he still wore the blue clothes of the night before. He led me up to windward, out of earshot of the helmsman, and it was plain that there was something on his mind.

"Did you see the new cook, doctor?" he asked, softly.

"Yes, captain," I answered, resolved to inform him of the mate's brutality, but waiting for an opening. He stared absently over my head a few moments, then said: "I hear he resembles me very much — so much that Mr. Rollins took him for me when he came aboard. Is that so?"

"Yes, captain, he does — physically. He even wore a suit resembling yours, and, this morning, blue trousers like yours."

"He did!" exclaimed the captain, suddenly; then, after a palpable effort at self-control, he said: "Mr. Rollins told me of his difficulty with him this morning. Did you see that?"

"Yes, captain, I did," I answered, warmly, "and a more cowardly, brutal attack on an inoffensive and unresisting man I never saw in my life. Why, he could not understand what the mate wanted of him, and for this he was maltreated."

"Maltreated?" repeated the captain, with doubt in his voice. "And did he make no resistance at all? —a man as large as—as myself, I hear."

"He made none whatever, nor uttered a word except in pain."

"Strange," muttered the captain; and even in the moonlight I saw that his face was ghastly and that beads of perspiration stood out on his brow. "What kind of a man is he—mentally?"

"A dull, insensate human animal," I answered,

shortly, a little disappointed at his reception of my outburst, "yet a happy, harmless person who, if not ill treated, will sing. He sang an English song, though a foreigner."

"What was it? Do you remember?" he asked, eagerly.

"The refrain ran like this," I answered, and then sang:

"'Goodness gracious, gracious goodness, goodness—'"

"Don't," gasped the captain. "Don't sing that song." He put his hands to his face, and his words came forth as though dragged from him against his will. Then he recovered himself and said: "That song is the curse of my life, doctor. It always preludes disaster to me. I heard the shipping-master sing it ashore—when I bargained with him for the cook. Don't sing it again. Oblige me. I am afraid of it."

"Why, certainly, captain," I answered, wondering what dark mystery in this man's past was stirred up. "But, no doubt, the cook learned it of the shipping-master on the way down."

"No, no," he declared; then, changing his tone with an effort, he added, "Yes, of course—very probable."

Mr. Rollins had come aft, peeped into the binnacle, criticised the helmsman, after the manner of mates, and had drawn close enough to hear the song but not the conversation.

"Great song—that," he remarked. "He was singin' it three minutes after I thumped him, and kept it up all day."

"Mr. Rollins," said the captain, sternly, "I have just explained to Dr. Fleming that the song is intensely disagreeable to me, that—in fact, it brings me bad luck. Suppress it aboard this ship. Let no man sing it, either in my hearing or out of it. Put that Sou'wegian—that double of mine—into your department, where you can have an eye upon him. Make a sailor of him. With God's help, I'll have an end of this."

He had begun calmly, but concluded in a passion of excitement. Then he looked wildly at us for a moment, then calmed down.

"Pardon me, captain," I ventured, "but I am a medical man, entitled to ask impertinent questions. You are extremely agitated. Have you met this man before in your life?"

He looked at me angrily, then said to the mate: "He is my worst enemy—on account of the resemblance, he has worked me incalculable harm—because he is my mental opposite. I now have him in my power. Make his mind like mine. Make him a sailor."

"I'll make somethin' of him, sir," said the mate, coolly. "Shark-bait if you say so."

"No, no," cried the captain, vehemently. "Not that, understand. You are not to injure him permanently, no matter what the provocation. Protect

him—even from himself. Do not go too far. Just make a sailor of him—and keep him out of the forecastle—away from the men. They'd drive him to suicide. Let him sleep in the cook's berth just the same, and find a man who can cook among the crew to take his work. Understand?—you are simply to make a sailor of Lars Hansen—that's the name on the articles—an incompetent and disrated cook."

"Yes, sir, I understand. There's another Sou'-wegian in my watch that can cook, he says. They were chinning together, and—"

"Send him aft."

A hulking Scandinavian sailor came aft at the mate's behest, and shambled up the poop-steps.

"Are you a cook?" asked the captain.

"Yaas, sir," answered the man. "I coo-oo-k mit my country ships."

"You will keep your bed in the forecastle, but do your work in the galley under the steward's orders. Is the cook a countryman of yours?"

"Ay, ay, sir. But—I dunno, sir. Dot fellar—he knows his name, but not his town. I ask him, Bergen, Trondhjem, Christiansand— I t'ink he is a Dane, sir; I t'ink he is—'

The sailor touched his forehead.

"No, he's sane, and a Norwegian," said the captain, unguardedly. "That'll do," he added, briskly. "Go forward. Remember," he resumed to the mate, "what I said, Mr. Rollins. You are to break that double of mine in to his work, but are not to injure

him—not to disfigure him. Understand? There is a—an occult connection of some kind. He is my living image, and physical harm to him comes to me in some manner—that is, if you blacken his eyes, mine will become discolored through sympathy. That is all I can explain to you now. But—make a sailor of him. Good-night—good-night, doctor."

"Crazy?" murmured the mate, inquiringly, when he had gone.

"Not necessarily," I answered. "Such cases of sympathy between doubles have been known."

"Well," said the mate, dryly, "I'm to make a sailor of him. Big job for one v'yage, but I'll try. Wonder what he did to the skipper to make him so sore?"

I was busy myself with the same speculation, and could not inform him—that is, in language that he could undertand. I went to sleep with my head full of obsessions, possessions, soul affinities, and such psychic problems, and when I came on deck in the morning I found that Lars Hansen's tutelage had begun. Clad in the soiled gray suit, he was wielding a broom with the rest of the watch in the morning wash-down on the deck, and, as I appeared on the scene, had just received a drenching from a bucket of water in the hands of the mate.

"Didn't I tell you," roared the officer, "to shut off that song?"

He turned for another bucket of water, and Hansen shook himself like a dog, sober of face, but

not apparently angry. Then his vacant smile came to him, he resumed work with his broom, and the words rolled out:

"Goodness gracious, gracious goodness—"

This time he got bucket and all. The impact knocked him down, and he whined inarticulately, while every face but his and the mate's wore a grin. But he picked himself up, silent for the few moments I remained there, and scrubbed vigorously. He had no mind, though a giant able to crush the mate in his arms. It was a shame to ill-treat him, but I could do nothing but show my indignation by leaving the deck.

His education proceeded on these lines for three days, to no appreciable result. He could master no details of a sailor's work requiring the slightest exercise of judgment, and could not remember for more than a few moments the inhibition of the song. Indeed, the ruling worked against itself; for the crew picked it up, and whenever the mate was far enough away a man would lift his head and sing, as loud as he dared, the ridiculous refrain, to the accompaniment of grins and jokes. During this time Captain Sutherland remained below, leaving the navigation of the ship to the mate; and the steward, in response to my inquiries, informed me that it was no unusual thing—that he often kept his room for days, permitting no one to enter, and ordering his

meals at rare intervals, and at any hour of the clock. My interest in a matter that neither the mate nor steward cared about was purely professional: as Lars Hansen now bore several scars and contusions on his face, I was curious to know of possible similar stigmata—such as he had hinted at—on the face of the captain.

Mr. Benson, the second mate, a young fellow on his first voyage as an officer—hence not in strong sympathy with the abuse of Hansen—had informed me that the men forward were only waiting for the captain's appearance on deck to bring the bruised and battered foreigner aft and make his complaint for him in English. And even as we talked on the poop, Captain Sutherland came out of the forward cabin door and paced a few turns on the main-deck.

"Been inspecting the log-book in the mate's room, I suppose," whispered Mr. Benson. "I hear he always does that first thing when he's through hibernating."

I noticed that the watch forward had begun to move about; then, as the captain climbed the lee poop-steps, evidently with a wish to avoid us, one of the men came aft and called up to the second mate, "Hansen's not in his bunk, sir, and we can't find him." Mr. Benson descended the steps and went forward with the man.

Had the poor wretch been driven to suicide? With this as a pretext, though with other thoughts in my mind, I strolled aft and faced the captain near the

binnacle. He looked at me and bade me a civil good-evening, but his voice seemed changed. The strong, vibrant, raspy intonation was gone from it; it quavered a little, and there was an air of drooping and despondency in his whole bearing. He seemed a sick man, and I would have addressed him professionally had I not seen marks on his face that called for other than mere medical diagnosis. Hansen had wound up the day with a black eye, a red and swollen nose, and a lacerated upper lip. In a lesser degree Captain Sutherland bore these disfigurations; his eye was not black, but puffed, his nose only slightly swollen, and his lip nearly normal. Was it stigmata?

"Pardon me, captain," I said, "but—your face is marked. Is it possible that you are suffering the pain of another?"

"I suppose so," he answered, wearily, moving away from the helmsman's vicinity. I slowly followed, and he turned and faced me.

"While I was below, ill in my berth," he said, in a strained, unnatural tone, "my double has been struck in the eye, on the nose, and on the mouth. There is no pain, only a puffed, itching sensation. Have you studied these things, doctor?"

"I have read of such transference of sensation, but it never came into my practice. If you can imagine the pain, you may know what the original victim has suffered at the mate's hands. Captain, it is inhuman; even the men are indignant, and have just told Mr.

Benson that he is missing from his bunk—perhaps gone overboard to escape it."

"Damn them!" he growled; then, to me: "Doctor, if I dared—if I thought it would bring no harm to myself—I would welcome such an escape. Let it go at that."

Mr. Benson arrived at this moment with the news from forward—Hansen could not be found. "There's a hatch from the galley leading down into the 'tween-deck, sir," he said. "Perhaps he's hiding down there, and put the hatch-cover on again."

"No," said the captain. "I know all about that hatch. He couldn't do it from underneath. If he don't show up to-morrow, he's overboard. Don't bother me"—his voice rose angrily—"with such things. I'm a sick man."

"Very well, sir."

Mr. Benson moved away, and halted near the weather mizzen-rigging, evidently putting the matter from his mind very easily; for he had hardly placed himself before he began humming louder as the melody progressed, the catchy, rollicking tune that the captain had forbidden to the first mate but not to him. The sick man was transformed.

"Hell and damnation!" he yelled; "will you hush up that music? By God, if you were not an officer I'd thrash you in your tracks. Didn't I say I didn't want to hear that infernal song?"

"Not to me, sir," said the young mate, with

dignity. "I caught it from the men, but I didn't know you objected to it."

"I do. My God; oh, my God, I do! Don't sing that song again."

His high-pitched, angry voice had sunk to a groan. He turned and fairly tottered to the companion, down which he went with stumbling feet. Mr. Benson looked at me in the moonlight.

"His mind is affected," I said, softly, and he nodded.

But, though this settled Mr. Benson's doubts, I still had my own. I remained up until eight bells, when Mr. Rollins came on deck and received Mr. Benson's report that Hansen was missing. As first mate, Mr. Rollins could act on his own initiative. He ordered a search of the 'tween-deck with lanterns, and in spite of my rheumatism I went down that hatch with the party, carrying my own bull's-eye lantern secreted in my pocket. And as Mr. Rollins, for reasons connected with his duties on deck and the temper of the men who went down looking for the missing ship-mate, remained above, it was easy to lose myself among the cargo while they searched around a square space under the hatch containing a reserve of coal and wood for use in the galley. They soon gave it up and ascended; then my bull's-eye disclosed what their lanterns had not—an opening among the boxes and cases of the cargo, high up near the beams, and on entering this I found that it enlarged and led aft, an irregular but clear passage

above the cargo. I followed it, passing the mainmast and later the mizzen. Knowing now that I was beneath the cabin, I found a soft spot, screened my lantern, and waited.

Not for long. Steps sounded above me; a hatch was lifted, letting down a flood of lamplight; then I heard the voice of the cook, cheerfully singing that fatal song; then the light was blocked by his body as, still singing, he dropped down beside me on the cargo. I turned on my bull's-eye and flashed the light in his face. He screened his eyes with his hands, whimpered, and drew back.

"Captain Sutherland," I said, sternly, "do you hear me? Wake up."

He whimpered again, then launched a volley of strange words at me—Norwegian or Danish, I suppose—but with a note of entreaty in them. But he only stood blinking at the light. I spoke kindly, advanced, and examined him. He wore the gray suit, still damp from the drenching of the morning, and creased irregularly, as though he had slept in it. But the white shirt was clean and the underclothing dry. I shook him, commanded him to wake up, and spent about ten minutes at the task; then commanded him to go forward to the galley.

"Galley," he repeated, stupidly, and started. He had learned the meaning of this English word.

I followed, saw him reach up and lift the hatch, in spite of his own statement that it could not be done, climb through and close it down; then I pondered for

about an hour on what I had studied of the phases of somnambulism and the deeper stages—alternating personality. But I could not solve this problem. Parts of it were clear, however. In his normal mind Captain Sutherland knew of his infirmity, and had only endeavored to conceal it by such means as were in his power—as, donning the gray suit before going to sleep in his cabin, so that he would be less likely to put on the blue again when he wakened as the cook; trying to mislead me with the suggestion of stigmata from another human being in psychic touch with himself; and assuming habits of retirement for days, contrary to all the habits of ship-masters and the usages of the sea. But why did the ridiculous song enrage him, and why did he so ardently desire that, as cook, he should be taught the work of a sailor? To bring about a similar mind-state between his two personalities? If he had studied psychology enough to learn of stigmata, he would hardly hope for a cure by such means; it would take three or four life-times.

I gave it up, ascended the hatch easily, put it on, peeped in and saw the captain, or Lars Hansen, as he now was, asleep in the cook's room, and went aft to my room without meeting any one. I wakened late, found a gray gale of wind brewing, and Mr. Rollins busy on the main-deck punishing Lars Hansen for "soldiering" through the middle watch.

The poor wretch was prostrate on the deck, his face bleeding, and hands held tightly over his eyes

and temples. He was crying inarticulately in his language, beseeching mercy, no doubt, from a brute that knew not the meaning of the word in his own. The mate, swearing bravely, was walking around him, shifting his position deliberately as he sought for an opening in the victim's defensive guard, and flourishing in his hand his favorite weapon—a rope's-end. Forward, the men were gathered together, scowling viciously, a few of them with belaying-pins in their hands. Above, the growing gale whistled and sang, and, one after another, the three skysails left the bolt-ropes and the flying jib went to ribbons; but the fatuous mate went on with his amusement.

I resolved to stop it, even though half aware now of the hidden design in it all. But just as I had started to speak, and the men forward had begun a rush, Lars Hansen sprang to his feet, looking wildly about him, and received a glancing, carelessly delivered blow of the rope. The wild look left his face, and was followed by an expression of sudden, human resentment, while he drew back a fist bigger than the mate's. But he did not strike out; instead, he glanced quickly and intelligently aloft and around, then at the indignant men flocking to his aid. Then he felt of his face.

"All right, men," he said, calmly. "Go forward. I'm the captain of the ship." He turned a steady, piercing eye on the dumfounded mate, who had dropped the rope to clinch his fist.

"Much obliged, Mr. Rollins," he said, "but I think I've had enough. Take in the canvas."

The mate stared vacantly at him. His jaw dropped and his fists unclinched.

"Take in the royals and mizzen-topgallantsail, Mr. Rollins," said Captain Sutherland, quietly, advancing a step towards the officer.

It was too much for the intellect of Mr. Rollins. He uttered a hoarse shriek of terror, then turned and fled towards the poop-steps, where he halted and looked back.

"Wait, Mr. Rollins," called the captain. "I'll explain."

He followed, and the mate sprang up the steps, raced aft, and looked forward from the taffrail. Then, as Captain Sutherland climbed the steps, and the bloody face appeared to his view, his limited mind gave way entirely. With an incoherent yell, he jumped on the taffrail, and, as the avenging vision called to him again, he dropped overboard.

There was confusion much confounded for a while. The ship was hove to and a boat lowered, but the mate was not seen again, and the men returned just in time to save themselves and the ship.

"I am an Icelander," said Captain Sutherland, when he explained matters to me. "The song has the tune of an old saga put to music. I do not know the psychology, but it always threw me into that condition. I became a Sou'wegian, though in my normal

state I could not learn the language. I spent three years as a cook in Norwegian craft, before I shipped in an American ship and was hammered back by a Yankee mate. So, you see, I knew the remedy, and applied it."

The Line of Least Resistance

I

"THERE was a sensational closing to the trial of First Mate Vaughn for the murder of Captain Anderson of the *Golden Era* while the ship was off Bermuda, outward bound The evidence, consisting of the second mate's testimony as to the quarrel between the two over the first mate's ill-treatment of a seaman, and his threat to kill the captain if he again interfered in his duties, the finding of the officer's jack-knife buried in the captain's breast, and the proven fact that the two men occupied the cabin alone at the time the deed was done, was sufficient to bring an immediate verdict of 'guilty' from the jury. At that moment a disreputable individual—a Frenchman — stepped forward and announced in a loud voice that the first mate was innocent—that he himself, the ill-used seaman over whom they had differed, had killed the captain. As, in spite of his rags, his bearing was calm and dignified and his speech, though broken, consistent with sanity and a former

acquaintance with better things, he was remanded on his confession, and the first mate released on bail pending a new trial, at which he will probably be acquitted."

I quote the above from a morning paper of the time. I was appointed to defend the penniless wretch who had confessed to this murder, and on visiting him in his cell found a sad picture of broken humanity. He was toothless and bald, except for patches of iron-gray hair bordered and divided by cicatrice and scar. From his wrinkled face, bronzed and leathery, shone a pair of deep-sunken, black eyes with a slumbrous fire that is sometimes seen in the eyes of madmen, but not often. To me they indicated what I since then found justified—the "fixed idea" which Hugo has described, which leads to heroism or madness. But he was sane; he laughed at me; he sneered at my offer of help; he gloried in his deed and was only anxious and impatient for the end. He wanted no help—no liberty—no continuance of life; but at last, after repeated visits, I learned what he did want, and, by a little Monte-Cristo persuasion of jailers, brought it in to him—absinthe. Then I obtained his story, which I give, transcribed by my stenographer, who accompanied me, and who has corrected only his mispronunciation, leaving his diction as he received it.

"What you want me tell? Why I kill him? What matter; I kill him. I should have killed him fifteen years before, when the great wrong was done. Better

he die innocent; better I die guilty than he live to do this wrong. My Lois, my flower of purity and goodness! What did he make her? What is she now if she live? What must she be? I saw her in her first degradation and misery—in her paint and powder. I saw her false diamond and tinsel. I hear her loud laugh.

"Listen. Fifteen years ago I was young man. I was twenty-four years old. I was just arrive from France, not the wreck you see now; not toothless and maimed by the handspike—the belaying-pin. My hair was black—shiny; my eyes were bright—bright with life and trust in my future. My teeth were white and even; I cared for them. I was proud of myself, because women and children like me. I had no vices—no drinking, no tobacco. I dress well; I was a gentleman; but I did not understand well your language.

"That city of Newport, you know? I teach music there. I get plenty of pupils for the piano, the violin. I do well; I save money. One of my pupils for little while was Lois. She speak my language; she was musician, too. Only I teach her the duet and train her voice. Oh, that voice! It was low and rich; it was soft and trembling. It was the roar of the surf in the storm; it was the murmur of a mother. I cannot tell of her voice. Her beauty was more; not her eyes, nor the soul within; not her grand crown of hair, golden, like the sunlight on the wet sand-beach; it was not the blush on her cheek, not her superb

figure, her grace of carriage; it was all, the whole. And I love her; I worship my Lois; and after a time, down by the sand-dunes, she say she love me; she would be my wife, but not yet; not until I was no more poor man, for she herself was poor, very poor. She say so.

"I was in my heaven for one month, and when my lessons were done for the day I would walk with Lois on the beach, far from the others. Once, only once, she let me kiss her. And I was afterwards ashamed; she was too pure, too innocent for that.

"Then came the captain of the big ship that was wreck off Nantucket. He was not gentleman; he was not refined, educated. But he was handsome, like a bull is handsome. He was very big, and his voice was loud, boisterous, and he laugh very much. He care nothing for Lois. I watch him. He treat her not with respect. He never care if she be near or far away; but he amuse himself. And my Lois walk no more on the beach with me; she walk with the big captain. One time I meet her alone. She try to avoid me. I force myself; I force her to speak. Then she say it was all mistake. She do not love me. She very sorry. Once after, I could not help, I follow, and see him kiss her.

"Then I go away with my desolation. I cancel my contracts; I sell my piano. I come to New York and begin with few pupils, but I cannot stay. I feel that I must be one man and not annoy Lois when she do not care for me, but I cannot. I must look at her,

though I must not speak. I come back to Newport. She is gone. I dare not ask where; it not my business. But Jules Jacquin, my friend and my enemy —my friend because I get him work; my enemy because I was more successful musician — he tell me that Lois and the big captain go away together. He laugh; he say that they are not married, and I strike him down for the insult to Lois.

"Then I go back, but the horrible thought was in my brain; it would not leave me. I visit the Maritime Exchange. I find that Captain Anderson have sail for Hong-Kong in big ship, new ship with passengers. I call on the ship's agents; I see the passenger-list. There was her name, Lois Montrose. There are other passengers, men, women, children, but no other name Montrose. Still, I not sure.

"I could no more attend to my pupils, and at last I must take employment. I play the piano in theatre orchestra for one year, for two year; and then, one night, I look up, and there I see Lois. Oh, mon Dieu. What was the play? It was the 'Black Crook.' What was Lois? She was chorus-girl; she was costumed for the part. I thought my heart was prepared, but the shock was the same as though I had not suspect. I know then that Lois, the pure, the good, was lost to herself; that my love was futile; that Jules was right.

"Yet it not my business; she do not belong to me. I tell myself this over and over; but it will not satisfy.

She had been deceive and cast off; that I know. She had loved and trusted—that is all. And the fault was not hers; the fault was the man's who had won her heart—and despised it.

"I could not play in that orchestra again; I could not look at her in her paint and powder—in her shame and degradation; but I watch night after night at the stage-door and see her come and go in the cab—sometime with one escort, sometime with two—and all the time laughing, so loud, so abandoned. After a while she come no more.

"Then for two years more I go downward, until I reach the level of poor, fallen Lois. I play in the dance-hall — in the concert saloon; I drink the whiskey and the absinthe; I ruin my stomach and my nerves. My face change so that I once pass Jules in the daytime and he not know me.

"Then come my blindness—come one time when I catch cold in my eyes. I do not care for them; they get worse; by-and-by I cannot see—I cannot make the music. I walk the street with cane—with green patch on my eyes, and then I have no money and am hungry. I stand still on the Sixth Avenue —on Fourteenth Street; I hold out my hand and feel pennies drop, and I put them in my pocket. One time I hear voice, "Poor fellow." It was her voice; the grand, full tone—the music of her soul. It was Lois, but I cannot see her. I call out once; then I think, I have no right. She is gone, but she have put a nickel in my hand. I have it now; I have sew

it in my vest. I have starve and thirst many time in ten year, but I never spend Lois's nickel.

"My eyes get well, and again I earn little money—enough to pay for the food, for the absinthe, but not for clothes. I sleep in the lodging-house, sometime in the doorway. One night, very late, I see her again, with rough people on Cherry Street. They talk loud and laugh very much; but her face was white under the gaslight, and she was dress so poor, so shabby. I know she suffer; I know the world go hard with her; and my heart go out to her in one great love and pity. I obey an impulse—I go up to her.

"'Lois,' I say, 'come with me. Do you not know me? Leave this life of sin and misery. We will begin again. I will care for you, and you shall help me. I will love you and you shall be my wife. I will lift myself, but always you shall be higher than I. Let me work for you, Lois. Come with me.'

"She could not look me in the face. For her shame she put her hands before her and step back. She did not speak. Then a big man—no, not the big captain—he spring forward and strike me on the mouth. That is when I lose my teeth. I fall and he strike with stick; he break my fingers—break the bones so that they are not straight again, and I no more play the piano or the violin. He lift me by the collar and call the policeman. I go to the station; next morning I go to the island; and when I come back I must again beg for my food, because I can no more play the piano or the violin.

"I think of it all. I think of it until my head ache. My Lois was ruined; my own life was ruined. One man is responsible—the big captain. I come to my great resolution: he shall die.

"I find at the Exchange the name of the ship he now command. She have just left Melbourne for Liverpool. I go to the dock and get work on the brick scow, on the canal-boat, to strengthen my arms, to tan my face so that I look like sailor. Then I ship for Liverpool in Baltimore brig as able seaman. I was not able seaman, so I was beaten, maltreated by the mates; but I learn a little of the work. I leave at Liverpool and find that the big, fast ship have not arrive, and I starve for a time and then ship for short run to the Mediterranean. I learn more of my work, but all the same I get the abuse, the mate's fist and the belaying-pin. When I get back I find the big ship have come and gone, for Boston. I try to ship in steamship, but cannot; I too small, they say, and I must wait long time before I can sign for Boston. I again too late; he have sail for Shanghai. I find that American ships sometime go from Shanghai to Manila in ballast; sometime to 'Frisco; seldom take cargo out of Shanghai. I ship for Hong-Kong; I desert at Anjer; I cross over to Batavia; then I work my way to Manila in native craft. The consul tell me that the big ship have gone from Shanghai to 'Frisco. I cannot catch him there, but I know that next port is Liverpool or London. I ship for Liverpool and meet his big ship towing out of the dock as

we tow in. I see him plain on his poop-deck—the big, strong, handsome animal—but I cannot reach him. I shake my fist in my rage, but I am too late. I find out on shore that he sail for Calcutta—but what use all this? I follow him around the world for ten year. He change his ship three times. Once I chase wrong ship for two year. Always I think of poor Lois; always I think of the moment when I reach him.

Each time I come to New York I wait; I look for Lois, to see her just once before I go. But I never see her again, never. Perhaps she is dead; she must be; the life kills. So I always go away; for it was my duty to avenge her.

"Three months ago I come back to New York; he come back to New York. But I cannot meet him until he sign his crew to go out. There are policemen in shipping-office, with club and revolver. I have nothing but knife, and he stand behind the railing while he pick out his men. I cannot reach him yet; but I sign with him. He not know me. I think he not know me as musician, as gentleman in Newport. And now I am rough; I am wrinkled and tanned; my teeth gone; my hands, that could play the piano, now so hard, so strong. I am able seaman; I can do my work. But no matter how well I can do my work, I am always abuse by the American mates. I not care this time; it was to be my last voyage. The first mate of the ship take dislike; he strike me; he club me every day. I cannot please him. One night

after he amuse himself this way, he send me up to the mizzentopsail-yard without oil-skins, to keep my watch below. When the man at the wheel strike the bell I must answer; I must call out, 'One bell, a-ll's w-e-ll'; 'Two bell, a-ll's w-e-ll'; 'Three bell, a-ll's w-e-ll'; and then I most crow like rooster and flap my arms like wings. But I not care. Down below me was Captain Anderson, my enemy, the man who must die. It was black night with rain. The ship was under to'gallantsail with the wind about a point free, so that the man at the wheel steer by compass, not by the wind; he not look aloft. A Pernambuco steamer—all lights, every window and dead-light—come up astern and pass to windward. I know all hands look; I know now my time. The second mate have the deck; I see him at weather mizzen-rigging looking at steamer. The watch are forward, looking too. The man at the wheel, he look at steamer; he look at compass. I know he not see well; the binnacle-light blind him. I am on weather yard-arm. I cross over; I climb down lee leach of lower topsail to cro'jack-yard. I crawl in. The cro'-jack-buntlines are stop with twine at the blocks, but I break the stops and overhaul. I find that lee middle-buntline is belayed at the fife-rail and will bear my weight. So I go down, forward of the sail, on the lee middle-buntline. The second mate he cannot see; the man at the wheel he cannot see, even when I reach the lee rigging below the sail, for the quarter-boat is in the way. The men for-

ward, they might see, but they far off and look at the steamer. I am in the lee alleyway. I crouch and creep forward, around the corner of the house. I reach the companionway and go down. I pass the first mate's room and see him sleep by his lamp. Shall I kill him? Shall I punish him for his abuse? No, he only poor, ignorant brute. But I see his knife—it was big jack-knife—on his desk, on his log-book. I take his knife; I feel its sharp point, its sharp edge. I go into the dining-room; I listen at the door of after-cabin; I hear him snore—the big, strong animal. I softly open the door and creep in. I see him in his state-room, in his berth. I close the door so it will not slam with the ship's heave. I think of Lois. I approach. Ah! Shall I tell you more? What use. It was murder, yes. He not even groan. He sit up; then he fall back and lie still. My work was done.

"Then I go back. I see the steamer through the weather companion-door. I reached the alleyway and climb the rigging. The second mate—he still look at the steamer. The man at the wheel—he look. The men forward—they look. I climb the buntline; I climb the leach of topsail; I crawl to weather topsail-yard-arm. Nobody see me. And then four bells strike below me. I answer and crow. I crow so loud. I put myself in it; I put my love for Lois, my despair, my wrecked life, my long agony of pursuit, my triumph, my vengeance—I put my soul in that crow. I crow so loud, so long, that the

second mate call me down and tell me go sleep and be quiet; and I go, for it was my watch below. They find the captain before eight bells. It come on to blow hard, and the second mate call him; then when he not answer, he go down."

Here I interrupted, and, directing my stenographer to include my part of the dialogue, asked him why, having escaped suspicion, he had confessed—whether or not it was to save the man who had ill-treated him.

"That no matter," he answered. "He only American mate—a dog, a brute; he know no better. Besides, I am grateful; he masthead me on the mizzen instead of the main. I owe to him my opportunity. Now I will die."

"Not necessarily," I said; "yours is a case where insanity can easily be proven—with a few witnesses, and perhaps some old photographs."

"I not insane."

"We can claim it, to save you from hanging. Where is Jules Jacquin?"

"I not know. I not care."

"Where is Lois Montrose?"

"Lois, Lois—she must be dead. The life kills."

"Perhaps not. Her testimony might be valuable.

"Her testimony? Would she be alive? Would she come? Can you find her? Can I see her? I would live for that—just to look at her—perhaps to touch her hand. Yes, yes, she is perhaps alive; she will be sorry. Tell her I die for her; I have avenge

her. I would see her; I would hear the voice; the old, grand tone, the music I love. Here, give her this that she gave from her good heart. I give it back if she will come."

He tore into the ragged lining of his vest and produced a nickel, worn smooth, which I took from him. He was too excited now for coherent conversation, and I left him, telling him that I would try and find her.

II

"Jules Jacquin, violinist, employed at Newport during summer of 1870 . . . died at Boston six years ago.

"Lois Faranac, alias Lois Montrose, American birth, French parentage, . . . educated in France, . . . was sequestered by her parents from the time of leaving school until she was of legal age, for reasons connected with the inheriting of a large property and the avoidance and tiring-out of an undesired fiancé to whom she had been betrothed in infancy . . . spent the summer of 1870 at Newport as Lois Montrose, and left hurriedly to take passage in the ship *Sunset* for a voyage around the world . . . was of age on her return, and, coming into her property, made her début in New York society . . . in 1873 was presented to the queen, and the same year married William Jerrold Floyd, an American millionaire . . . is the mother of four children . . . is a leader in her

set, and in church and philanthropic work . . . is now living at 5— Fifth Avenue, New York City."

The above, containing all that has a bearing on the matter in hand, I condense from the report of the detective whom I employed. I had hoped—professionally—that I could show the jury as an object-lesson, a wretched example of lost womanhood, and arouse a sympathy for my client; but I realized, on reading the report, that, unless the detective had followed a false trail, my case was as good as lost; that a terrible mistake had been made—a life needlessly wasted and a life needlessly taken. However, if Mrs. Floyd were really Lois Montrose, she alone could explain the discrepancy, and, as it was my business to know, I wrote to her on my office stationery requesting an interview. Her answer, appointing the following afternoon, came back with the messenger, and at the hour specified I was in her parlor.

One of the queenliest women I have ever seen came down to meet me. Her hair—a wealth of it—may have once been of the color described by the prisoner, but it was now a Titian red, golden only as the sunlight from the window touched it. She was of the blonde type, pink and white, and not a line of care or trouble appeared in her face. Her eyes were brown, making a striking combination of color; but it was her voice—she spoke—that impressed me most; it was deep, rich, vibrant.

"I am Mrs. Floyd," she said, with a smile, as she

waved me to a chair. "Please state the nature of your business."

It was to be harder than I had thought to discuss this woman's past, and I think my voice was a little unsteady as I said, rather abruptly, "I am here in connection with the murder of Captain Anderson in his cabin while the ship was at sea."

There was not a quiver of her eyelids as she said, "How may I assist you?"

"You knew Captain Anderson, I believe?"

"I knew him?" Her eyes opened in surprise. "No; I have no recollection—Captain Anderson." She seemed to be thinking deeply.

"Did you not make a voyage with him in the ship *Sunset* about fifteen years ago?" I asked, watching her face closely.

"Oh, dear me! Captain Bill. Was it he—murdered?" She arose from the chair she had taken with an expression of horror on her face, while she wrung her hands nervously. "Captain Bill. Oh, it is dreadful. I read of it in the papers, but I never imagined it was our Captain Bill. Why, he was one of the best and kindest and jolliest men I ever knew. Who would kill him? But they have the murderer, have they not—the first mate?"

"He is innocent," I said, relentlessly. "The murderer is François le Fevre, who has confessed."

Again there was no sign of recognition in her face as I mentioned this name. She merely shrugged her

shoulders and said, quietly: "I hope he will hang. Poor Captain Bill."

Though doubtful that this woman would throw any light on the case, or aid in any way, I was resolved, having started, to go as far as she would permit.

"He need not hang," I said, "if you care to save him."

"I save him? How can I? Or, rather, why should I? He killed a good, brave man. He was so kind. Why, he taught me navigation on that voyage, and all the sailors' knots."

"Do you know François le Fevre?"

"I have no recollection of him. Who is he?"

"The murderer. He knew you when you were young; just before you sailed on that voyage."

Her face wore a puzzled look. "He was your music teacher at Newport," I said.

"Oh," she answered, disdainfully, while a slight flush came to her face. "That Frenchman; that exquisite. Yes, I knew him. Has he developed to murder? I remember him now. He was very amusing; it was so funny to hear him make love in his broken English. I flirted with him, I am sorry to say. I was very young, just out of school, and with no more dignity than has any other girl of twenty. But why did he kill Captain Bill?"

"Pardon me, Mrs. Floyd; I will tell you in time. First, if you will permit me, I would like to ask you

a few questions. Have you seen François le Fevre since you left Newport that time?"

"Never. He had passed out of my life. I would not have remembered his name had you not mentioned it and described him."

"Have you ever been on the stage, Mrs. Floyd—in the ballet, for instance? Were you not once a member of the 'Black Crook' company?"

The effect of this thrust was more than I anticipated. The flush extended to her throat, and she arose, with indignation and scorn in her eyes, and walked the full length of the room, standing a moment in a corner with her back towards me. Then she returned, with a white face and tearful eyes.

"I cannot imagine, sir," she said, and her musical voice trembled with anger, "why you have probed into my past or what I have to do with this case. Only the thought that somehow, I do not know how, I may be of service in the cause of justice, that I may possibly aid in bringing to punishment the murderer of my old friend, induces me to continue this interview. It is due myself to explain how and why I was on the stage. I was mistress of my time and money; I was young, foolish, and stage-struck, but with no dramatic ability. I could have bought a theatre and hired a company; but I knew that I needed training and was too impatient to take a course of instruction. As I could not act, I obtained a position as chorus-girl, and effectually disguised myself with paint and 'make-up' so that none in

the audience would know me. Mr. Floyd, whom I married later, and my brother, two harum-scarum youngsters, were in the secret, and escorted me to and from the theatre until the mood left me. How this one experience of my life, of which I am ashamed, has come to your knowledge, is beyond me. I was not recognized; I am sure I was not. Every paper in New York would have mentioned the escapade in such a case."

"You were recognized. François le Fevre was a member of the orchestra and saw beneath the powder and paint."

"The contemptible scoundrel. So he told of it." Her fingers worked nervously, and the bitter speech left her lips through closed teeth.

"He also said, Mrs. Floyd, that he met you on the street, late at night, in the lowest region of New York; that you were dressed very poorly, evidently suffering from extreme poverty; that he spoke to you; that you were ashamed of your position and did not answer him; and that a big man in your company struck him and handed him over to the police."

The astonishment in her face left no room for any indignation she may have felt to show itself. I reminded her that her memory was treacherous, and asked her to think. After a moment a light came to her eyes and she looked frankly at me.

"I think I remember," she said. "We were slumming. My husband was one of the party. It was a questionable amusement at best; more so in

our case, for we went in disguise. I wore my cook's oldest dress and bonnet. I remember a tramp accosting me, who seemed to be crazy. The detective whom we had employed as escort knocked him down and called a policeman. So that was your murderer! To think that a pitiful weakling like that could kill such a man as Captain Bill!"

"He killed him in the dark," I said, resolved to carry out the terrible farce to its end. "He drove a knife into his heart as he slept." She shuddered.

"Do you remember, Mrs. Floyd," I asked, "of giving François le Fevre a nickel when, blind and destitute, he was begging on the street?"

"I do not remember. I always give them something. It is unlucky to pass them by."

"Here is the nickel," I said, as I drew it forth. "He has asked me to give it to you."

"I do not want it," she answered, petulantly. "What is the meaning of all this, sir?" she added, as she glanced at a timepiece on the mantel.

"Mrs. Floyd," I rejoined, pocketing the nickel, "I will say that I believe every word you have told me. But, that you may know of another aspect of the case which appears true to François le Fevre, I will read you his statement, if you will listen."

"I do not care to."

"You will never forgive yourself if you do not. You will read it in the papers when the trial comes off, and will then know the vital connection which you have had with this murder."

"I will listen," she said, as she seated herself and folded her hands with a bored expression on her face. I drew forth the type-written story and began. She uttered a few exclamations of astonishment or verification as I reached points of the narrative which concerned her, and, looking at her face occasionally, I noticed that it was taking on a strained intensity of expression. When I finished with his passionate appeal to me to bring her to him—that he might look at her and hear her voice before he died—she had covered her face with her hands and was crying softly. She had the heart of a woman, after all, I thought, and a little hope came to me that she would help in saving his life.

"Mrs. Floyd," I said, gently, "I am the prisoner's attorney. Is it expecting too much if I asked you to aid me in saving him from the gallows?"

"How can I assist," she asked, drying her eyes. "It is all a mistake—a horrid mistake—based upon the jealousy and slander of his friend. There was nothing between Captain Anderson and myself. Yes, he did kiss me—against my will—but I punished him for it, and he apologized abjectly. Later—at sea—he proposed to me and I refused him. Why, my mother and aunt accompanied me on that voyage."

"I wish to prove insanity. Will you testify to what you have said?"

"Appear on the witness-stand? Open my private life to the public? A woman in my position—a witness in a murder trial? Not I."

"Then he must hang, Mrs. Floyd. He has confessed, and glories in his work."

She made no response, and looked out the window.

"Will you not visit him?" I continued, as the hope left me and my thoughts travelled from the worn nickel in my pocket to the deluded wretch down in the Tombs. "Will you not see him and cheer his last days? Remember, his heart and soul—his whole existence — for all these long years since you first knew him has been one steady devotion to you."

"I cannot do that, either," she said, as she brought her gaze within the room. Then she burst into tears again and swayed back and forth in the chair. "I am too well known." Her voice was broken, and her chest rose and fell with the violence of the emotion she was struggling to suppress. "My children —my position—it would start all kinds of gossip; tongues would wag for a year."

"Then will you not write to him?"

"No, no, no, I will not. It is hard enough to bear as it is. I would like never to think of it again."

There was a slight note of laughter in her voice now, and, being a married man, I knew what was coming—also the remedy.

"Mrs. Floyd," I said, sternly, as I rose—for, besides wishing to forestall the hysterical mood, I was thoroughly angry—"you shall write. I have the power to call you as a witness at the trial, where you will have the choice of three things—perjury, contempt of court, and telling the truth. Whichever

you choose, depend upon it your private life will be given to the world, for I shall read his statement to the jury. But, inasmuch as the disillusioning of this poor creature would be cruel in the extreme—as it would be more merciful to let him die in his faith in himself and his mission than to save him to madhouse confinement, I prefer to waive my right to summon you, but only on condition that you write as I dictate."

She had drawn herself to full height and stepped towards a bell on the table. Something in my face may have arrested her hand, for she looked at me steadily for a moment, and then said, "What must I write?"

"I will show you." Tearing two blank leaves from my note-book, I scribbled on one, and handed both to her with the pencil.

"Transcribe it into your own style of writing, Mrs. Floyd, and sign your first name only."

She read it over and over, with a little smile on her lips—at first scornful, then weary and sad.

"You will promise," she said, "not to bring me further into this case, and that you will return this note to me afterwards?"

"I promise you. Your name shall never appear."

She copied the note on the blank leaf and gave it to me.

I have always felt, even with a full and honorable consideration of my promise to Mrs. Floyd, that had I called François le Fevre to the stand to tell his

story and read the note, the jury's verdict would not have been "guilty." But professional scruples, and a due regard for the memory of Captain William Anderson—and for the eternal fitness of things—prevented me. I called no witnesses — for I had none—my defence consisting of an impassioned appeal to the feelings of the jury, which included a hint as to the prisoner's motive, but with no reference to names, dates, or places.

His bearing throughout the trial was tranquil, abstracted, and the slumbrous fire in his eye was changed to a soft light that seemed not of earth, which left them but once, when he listened to my plea for his life; he then looked reproachfully at me.

He was sane as the judge, saner than some; but he longed for death and grew happier as the day of his execution approached. I was allowed to accompany him to the scaffold, where his last voluntary act was to kiss the written lie I had given him and hand it to me. It ran as follows:

"My dear François,—I have just learned what you have done for me. You did well, François. He ruined both our lives. Oh, I have wished so often that I had loved you in time. I can tell you now. I have loved you since you spoke to me in Cherry Street, but I never could find you again. If I only could live now and you could only be free! But the lawyer says there is no hope for you, and I am dying — dying of hunger and neglect and sickness. I am only a bad, worthless woman, François; but he made me so —and you have punished him. I will be dead before you get this, and I shall die with your nickel in my hand. I

shall press it to my heart. We will meet soon, not in heaven, perhaps, but not in hell, I know, for God is good. Good-bye, my François—my darling.

"Lois."

However, there may be an element of prophetic truth in that note, for when I gave it to her she asked me for the nickel.

The Lobster

WE called him Lobster from the first. He was overgrown and stupid, his trousers bagged at the knees and were too short—I suppose he never dreamed of creasing them—and he wore celluloid collars and cuffs and any kind of necktie. He attended school with us, but, aside from mathematics and physics—which he seemed to know without studying—he could not learn. His mother tried to teach him how to dress, but he took no interest—had absolutely no idea of what makes a gentleman. As for his sister, she said that she preferred him as he was, for then he was natural; but that was just like her.

He had a most disagreeable manner, too. He would look you right in the eyes until you got through talking, and then say nothing at all, or turn his back on you. And when he did speak he would make such mean remarks. For instance, a young lady was telling us how mortified she had felt the day before when she lost her pedals, and, not having learned to put her feet on the coasters, was com-

pelled to ride her bicycle down a long hill before crowds of people with her feet hanging down most ungracefully; and all the Lobster could find to say was that she ought not to worry over it—that it was exactly the attitude of an angel in flight. I advised the young lady never to speak to him again.

We did not care to associate with him, and he spent most of his spare time wandering about the woods with an old gun, or down in a little shop that he had rigged up in the garden. Here he would busy himself for hours on some kind of gimcrackery —first one thing, then another. One day—we were all about twenty then—he brought out after school-hours what he called a model flying-machine—a lot of wings and fans and clock-work about three feet long—and Charlie and Jack and I followed along to see the fun. He wound it up and was just ready to start it when Charlie pushed me, and I fell against Jack, who fell over the machine and smashed it. Lobster looked awfully cheap, and I laughed until I cried, but Jack did not. He coaxed Lobster to fix it up and try it again so that we could see it go, and even helped him carry it back to the shop. After a while they brought it out, and this time I pushed Charlie and he pushed Jack. The machine was totally wrecked, but we did not laugh much, for Lobster got into a terrible rage. He grabbed Jack and held him so that he could not move; then, when he had recovered his breath—for Jack was nearly as big and strong as he was—he pounded his face until

Jack was nearly dead before he let him go. He did not touch Charlie and me. Lucky for him, too, for we would have had him arrested. That was what we hoped Jack would do, but when we proposed it on the way home he just kicked us both and said nothing. I thought it was very unkind, and I never knew him to act so strangely before; for, the first thing in the morning, he apologized to Lobster in the presence of the whole school, and told Charlie and me that he would take it upon himself to keep insects like us from harassing him, and that if anybody in the school ever called him Lobster again in his presence he would break that person's head.

So after that we called him George, and only used Lobster in the third person and when Jack was not around. They became great friends, though why, I could not understand, for Jack was a gentleman and his father had millions. He was a good rider, swimmer, and yachtsman, and owned the fastest cat-boat on the bay, while Lobster had neither money, brains, nor refinement. But his sister Jennie was very pretty and very nice. At least I thought so then, and on her account I had to tolerate the brother while I was calling on her. But there came a time when she told me I had better not call on her any more, and after that I did not care how I treated him, for I think that he influenced her.

Charlie took my place and seemed to get on very well with Jennie. At least he did a great deal of boasting, though it may have been just to tease me,

However, after Miss Swinton, Jack's sister, came home from abroad I did not care what he said.

Jennie was one of those blonde, fluffy-haired girls, but Miss Grace Swinton was tall and dark-eyed—a statue-like sort of girl. She had finished her education in Europe, and was very self-possessed and accomplished — as much an athlete, almost, as her brother—and she had such a dreamy way of listening while you talked that you hardly knew what to say, and when you were through talking you could not tell whether you had impressed her or not.

We graduated in time, and Jack went to college, while Charlie and I secured positions in the city, going to business early in the morning and going into society every evening. I got on swimmingly with Miss Swinton. I knew she liked me because, after we had become well acquainted, it was so easy to make her laugh, and I should most certainly have proposed to her if Charlie had not interfered so much. Something had happened between him and Jennie, for he stopped calling on her, encroaching on my preserves instead. We almost quarrelled about it, but Jack came home at vacation time and spoiled both our chances, for he took up with the Lobster and brought him to his house. Then Miss Swinton seemed to lose all interest in Charlie and me and developed a most unaccountable interest in Lobster, going down with her brother to Lobster's old shop, where he would talk mechanics with her and show her his inventions. His

last was a chainless bicycle which he had just patented.

He made frequent trips to the city on this business, and would come back with new collars and clothes and things to make himself appear better, but he could not succeed in this, no matter what he wore, and neither Charlie nor I could understand what Miss Swinton saw in him. They would take long walks together just the same as though he was her social equal, and Charlie and I would follow a short way back, until one day—well, we got tired of following them. We told Jack, however, that he ought to look out for his sister and not allow her to go walking with such a ruffianly brute, but he merely said something about the Lobster's selling his patent for twenty thousand and royalties, and said something more about folks minding their own business. So we stopped trying to meet Miss Swinton in society.

When the term began Jack went back to college, and a few days later something occurred which prevented the Lobster from meeting Miss Swinton in society. Charlie and I overtook him as we walked up from the station in the evening. His hat was gone, and he was muddy, damp, and dishevelled. He could barely stumble along, and every few yards he would stop and cling to a tree or paling for support. But he was not intoxicated, as we thought at first. He told us, when we inquired, that he had been out with his gun and early in the day had fallen into a swamp. Then, to prevent catching cold, he had bought qui-

nine in a neighboring town without getting directions, and, as he had never taken it before, he ignorantly swallowed the whole purchase—sixty-five grains. It would have killed Charlie or me, but only weakened him and made him dizzy. We accompanied him along, for his way home led past the Swintons' place, and we wanted to see any possible results. Sure enough, there was Miss Swinton at the window.

That evening we met her—accidentally—and she inquired about Lobster. Now if we had told a lie there would be some reason in blaming us, but we did not—we simply said, jokingly, too, that he had taken too much of something or other, which was the truth. Miss Swinton merely smiled a little and turned the subject. We never supposed that she had taken us seriously until, a few evenings later, when Lobster had recovered, we were near the Swintons' place—accidentally, understand—and saw the Lobster go up the front steps and a minute later come down. And there was Miss Swinton at the window. She was "not at home" to him, and all in all we agreed to let the matter alone. We had been told to mind our own business, and it served him right for his presumption. Next day Miss Swinton left for the city to spend the winter.

Though both she and Jack were back for the Christmas holidays, I am sure that neither met the Lobster, who had taken to his old clothes again and become more unsociable than ever. During holiday

week he found urgent business in the neighboring town where they were making his bicycles, and of course Jack was puzzled and called repeatedly at his house. But Jennie could not tell what ailed him, and I supposed Miss Swinton had never spoken of the matter at all, while the Lobster, of course, was too stubborn to tell anybody. So things went on in this way—Charlie and I going into society every evening, and calling on every young lady in town except Miss Swinton and Jennie—until the following summer, when Jack came home on vacation again and his sister returned from the city.

Jack hunted for Lobster, but the big fool was still on his dignity, taking long bicycle rides and getting up early and returning late, so that all Jack found when he called was Jennie. However, he persisted, which at the time seemed strange in Jack, and after a while Miss Swinton, too, became very friendly with Jennie, and the three were always together—so much so that Charlie and I began to fear that Jennie was concocting some scheme for her brother's benefit. But the Lobster himself, in his own peculiar way, reassured us. He was in town one day, and Charlie and I were right behind him—he was going our way, but of course we did not join him—when Miss Swinton came around the corner and met him face to face. We saw her start slightly and flush a deep red, but Lobster swung by her with his long stride as though not conscious that she existed. He was anything but a gentleman: he did not know that

a young lady is not to be taken too seriously. Miss Swinton was so shocked by his manner that when she passed Charlie and me she was frightfully pale and did not even see us. And we were so agitated ourselves by this occurrence that we did not make ourselves known, as we might have done under ordinary circumstances.

Then came that awful trip in the yacht. Jack had fitted out his cat-boat, and we learned in a roundabout way that he would take his sister and Jennie for a sail down the bay. So we put on our yachting suits that morning and managed to be at the clubhouse when they came down. Jack invited us, but in a rather unkind way, I admit. He said, "Come along, and if there's any wind I'll take the starch out of those duds."

We accepted, of course, though we would not have gone without Miss Swinton, for we did not like yachting any more than we liked Jennie. Miss Swinton was very agreeable and Jennie tried to be, but found herself almost ignored, for we addressed ourselves only to Miss Swinton and Jack. It was lovely weather, and we sailed miles and miles down the shore until long after mid-day, then dropped the anchor in a little bay to have luncheon. Then, just as we had finished and were lighting our cigarettes and were having the most enjoyable time, who should appear on the beach but the Lobster with a smashed bicycle on his shoulder!

Jack was all excitement at once, and hailed him,

but the Lobster started towards the road with his wheel, paying no attention whatever. So Jack jumped into the little boat and pulled ashore. We saw them meet, shake hands, and talk a little, then turn back to the beach. Out they came in the boat, talking earnestly, and Charlie and I were awfully afraid that they were explaining things concerning us. But it was only Lobster's way of telling how he had left his repair kit at home and smashed the wheel. He was still talking as he lifted the machine over the rail and climbed up, saying that this meeting saved him a ten-mile tramp to the station.

Miss Swinton had gone right down into the cabin when she saw him coming, but my friend and I greeted him decently, and Jennie made some sisterly comments on the condition of his clothes—all dust and mud. He just nodded to Charlie and me, told Jennie to stop scolding, and asked Jack where he was to put his wheel. "Down below," said Jack, and down went Lobster. Charlie and I strained our ears, but there was nothing said, and soon he came up, red as a beet. Miss Swinton, equally constrained and embarrassed, followed in a few moments. In fact, it was very embarrassing for all of us, except Jack and Jennie. They did not seem to mind.

We started back now, but had not gone far before the wind died away and it began raining. The young ladies went below, and Charlie and I followed to close all the little round windows in the cabin to keep the rain out. Then we stayed there, in spite

of Jack's remarks, for we did not want to spoil our clothes. Lobster, however, remained up in the rain. His clothes could not be spoiled. But we found his old bicycle was right in everybody's way, and his sister called to him to take care of it. So he came down, too, and was just putting it into a berth—all dirt as it was—when Jack yelled down:

"Stand by for a squall. Come up, all of you."

Before we could get to the steps there was an awful sound of wind, and the boat began to tip. We all slid over to the side of the cabin, then a lot of water came down the steps, the door closed with a bang, and we were in darkness with the floor and ceiling perpendicular. The boat was on her side.

Of course every one screamed—all but Lobster, who swore. He groped his way to the door but could not open it. Then he growled:

"What fool built this death-trap. Door at the side and opening outward."

Just then all the little round windows that were under water opened and let in a perfect rush of it. Lobster yelled to close them, and we had to get right down almost under water in order to do it. But one was broken, and when Lobster learned of it he made us climb up and make sure that the upper ones were screwed tight. When this was done the cabin was half full of water, and we sat on the centreboard-box, which made a broad shelf in the middle. Jennie was awfully frightened, crying like a baby, and she asked her brother if there was any real danger.

"No, little girl," he answered, "we won't sink unless the air leaks out. We're floating on compressed air; that's what makes our ears buzz so. The door is under water, and so is the broken dead-light, but the upper ones seem to be tight and the centreboard-box opens on deck, so not a drop more of water can get in; and before long Jack can get help to right us, but we must remain quiet as possible."

Then I heard him mutter, "It happened once before." But at the time I did not know what he meant.

We could hear the sound of the storm above and Jack's boot-heels on the door as though he were trying to kick it in. Lobster climbed back and played a tattoo on the ceiling with his knife handle, and we learned afterwards that he was telling him by telegraphy, which both of them understood, to cut away the mast if he could but not to open the door, as it would sink the boat and drown us all.

I was a little frightened, I admit, and I know Charlie was, too, for I heard him saying his prayers, and after a while I heard him crying. He said afterwards that he did not cry until he heard me crying, but I know better. Jennie was still crying, but not a sound came from Miss Swinton's lips. Lobster had not spoken to her nor she to him.

By this time we could see things by the little light which came through the round windows, and Lobster left the steps and climbed towards his bicycle, which he examined all over. It was badly damaged, but

the big foot-pump which he always carried under the top-bar was intact and also the tire-valves. He unwound the wire which held one of the valves to the tire and cut off the coupling-screw at the end of the pump-hose, replacing it with the valve, which he bound on with the wire exactly as it had been bound to the neck of the tire. In spite of our danger he was the same ill-mannered boor, for when I asked him why he did that he answered, without looking at me at all:

"To make little boys ask questions."

He unscrewed the head of the pump, took out the plunger, and reversed the leather; then he put it back. I did not understand until afterwards that he was changing an air-compressor into an air-extractor—a contrivance to pull air into the cabin. When he had talked with Jack again by their telegraphy, he dived under water and secured a small brace and bit from a locker. Then, telling Charlie to "stand by with the pump," he bored a hole in the side of the cabin over our heads, stopped the hole with his finger until Charlie had reached him, and then screwed in the valve, which had an outside thread and was just the size of the hole. Next he firmly bound the pump by its stirrup to the thumb-screw of one of the windows, so that it hung upside down. He pumped carefully a few strokes, found that it worked, and said:

"Good enough. No present danger of suffocation, though we'll have to pump against two atmospheres at least. Now, listen, all of you. One must pump,

the rest remaining quiet so as to consume as little oxygen as possible. You two Miss Nancys will take turns with me at the pump—and if you don't stop that snivelling I'll hold your heads under water until you do."

He was always the same. No extremity of danger or example of cultivated society could make the least improvement in him.

Then began that horrible labor for life which lasted eighteen hours, while Lobster made new plungers for the pump as they wore out, from the leather in his shoes, and afterwards from Charlie's and mine. Jennie stopped crying after a while, and she and Miss Swinton sat with their arms about each other, while Lobster, Charlie, and I took turns at the pumping. By lying face upward on the centreboard-box we could just reach the handle and pull downward, but it was awfully hard work and every breath of air that we pulled in came charged with the odor of the lubricant in the pump.

After a time—a long time, during which Jack up above occasionally hammered—the boat began to pitch and toss, and Lobster said that if she were not half full of water she would right herself now even against the weight of the mast and sail. Either the motion of the boat affected me or it was the bad air, and I became so deathly sick and weak I could not pump. The others continued until Charlie, too, gave out. Then Lobster pumped alone. I noticed how hard and heavy he breathed, and that Miss Swinton

was the same. Perhaps it was because they were much larger than the rest of us and really needed more air. I know my own suffering was frightful. By-and-by I heard Charlie crying again and trying to pray. It made me think of what we had said about Lobster, and though I tried to put the thought away it would come back. I felt that we had not treated Miss Swinton right in allowing her to deceive herself, and that if I was to die I ought to say something about it. So I crawled over to where she sat with Jennie, and told the real truth in a low voice so that no one else might hear, and was called a "contemptible little wretch" for my pains. Then I crawled back. I could hardly move now and did not care to speak to Lobster. It was afterwards that I learned that Miss Swinton was unconscious in Jennie's arms and that I had confessed to Jennie.

I think I went to sleep or fainted after this incident. I know that I did no more pumping, and have a dim recollection of being pushed about; but it seemed to be a week after the boat tipped over when I was awakened by sliding off the centreboard-box into the water, and all I cared about was to make sure that my head was out. Then I went to sleep again, reclining against the centreboard-box. After a long time—I do not know how long—I was wakened again by a crashing noise and a rush of water in my face; and there I was, up to my neck in it, looking at a square of light formed by the open door, and floundering towards us through the water was a man who

brought with him the sweetness and freshness of the morning air above.

"Jennie—Grace," he called in gasps, for he seemed to be choking. "Are you alive? I can't see—speak, somebody!"

"Here, Jack," said Jennie's voice behind me. "Take Grace."

I looked around, and there was Jennie supporting Miss Swinton and barely able to hold her own head above water. Charlie was climbing out of a berth, and Lobster, still and quiet, blue in the face—and with the awful look of a dead man on it—was leaning against the slanting centreboard-box with one hand extended to the handle of the pump.

It did not take us long to get to the door, you may be sure; but, quick as we were, Jack was ahead of us with his sister, whom he carried as he might have carried a child. He placed her on the deck above. She was breathing, though unconscious. Down he went again and brought up Jennie, who had fainted in his arms, and whom he was kissing as though she were the only girl on earth. Then, taking a long breath, he went for Lobster, and when he brought him he brought the pump, too; for, though Jack had strength to carry him he had not strength to twist his fingers from the pump-handle.

He was not dead, but might have been had the boat grounded ten minutes later. It was the going down of the tide that righted her, sliding us off the centreboard-box, and afterwards enabling Jack to

open the door. A little pounding and shaking brought Lobster to a breathing condition, and a little cold water dashed in her face revived Jennie. No one talked, or wanted to; we just lay sprawled around that deck and breathed fresh air, while Jack looked first at one, then at another, and smiled—such a smile. He was not the Jack we knew at all; his hair had turned gray and he seemed unable to close his lips, which were twisted and drawn into an expression of pain, while his eyes were sunken deep in his head. It was the suspense after we had stopped answering his signals, he said later, that had made him old within a few hours. Horrible as Lobster looked, Jack looked worse, especially when he smiled. His hands were covered with blood, and forward were signs of the work that had made them bleed. He had whittled half-way through the mast.

Lobster was breathing in great, convulsive sobs, his chest heaving four inches high, and Miss Swinton was not much better. But she came to her senses first and Jack assisted her to sit up. She looked around in a dazed kind of way, then, spying Lobster flat on his broad back, she pushed Jack away, crawled to Lobster's side, and looked into his face a moment as though she could devour him with her eyes. Then, with a little whimpering moan, she fainted beside him. But Lobster did not know it. Jack lifted her away from him and nursed her back to consciousness; and when Lobster came to himself afterwards and sat up, he simply shook hands with Jack

and kissed Jennie without saying a word. But he paid no attention to Miss Swinton, nor to Charlie and me; in fact, he never did notice Charlie and me unless we spoke to him first. Miss Swinton kept her big, dark eyes upon him until his manner became too apparent, then they filled with tears, and she did not look at him any more. I was glad of that, for it was very painful to witness.

Although we had not eaten for nearly twenty-four hours we were not in the least hungry, but we were very weak, and it was three hours before we felt like leaving the boat. Then she was high and dry, and Jack tied a long rope to a near-by tree, to hold her when the tide rose again; and we all went ashore, meeting some natives, who stared rudely at us as we asked the way to the nearest station, and whom Jack paid liberally to watch his yacht.

On the way Jack and Jennie paired off ahead and seemed to be talking earnestly, and Lobster, who, of course, would not walk with Miss Swinton, and I, who did not care to just then, walked together, leaving Charlie to follow on with Miss Swinton. Suddenly Jack and Jennie stopped, stared hard at Charlie and me as we passed, and called to Lobster. He joined them, and they talked for a few moments while I followed Miss Swinton and Charlie; then Jack called his sister and she went back, while Charlie and I walked on. I had to explain now, for he was very curious to know what was going on—and I knew. I knew that Jennie had heard what I had

only meant Miss Swinton to hear, and that she was telling.

Of course, Charlie called me all kinds of fools—it is a habit he has—but I would not listen, and turned my back on him to look at the others. Miss Swinton was standing close to Lobster, with one hand on his shoulder. She was talking excitedly, while he looked down into her face and the others listened. I knew by the shining of her eyes that she was crying, and though I could not hear what she was saying, I guessed—she was pleading forgiveness. Her clothing was wet and draggled and her hair all loose, but she never looked so queenly and beautiful, even in society, as she did then, and it affected me so that I could not bear to look any longer. I turned on Charlie and was giving him just as good as he sent, when I heard a footstep and a snarling sound behind me; then Jack was upon us.

His horrible eyes blazed in his horrible face; he was in a perfect fury of rage—certainly insane—and before we could escape he buried his bloody hands in our hair and—never uttering a word, remember—just bumped our heads together. It was torture. He held us while we called for help, and bumped, and bumped, and bumped. And Miss Swinton and Lobster and Jennie merely looked on, never offering to interfere. At last, just as I thought I was going to faint—or die—he whirled us around him, turning himself; then, when we were going so fast that our

feet left the ground, he let go, and Charlie went one way while I went the other. We swooned in earnest then, and when we recovered they were gone, so we went home without them.

I knew when Jack first took up with Lobster that there was a crazy streak in him, which only needed such an experience as ours to develop into genuine lunacy. We have not seen any of the four since then, as we have not gone into society very much lately; but we have learned that the two weddings will come off together. However, there is one thing that Charlie and I are agreed upon—if we are invited we will just send our regrets.

On Board the "Athol"

SQUAT, swarthy, and malignant, he paced the quarter-deck in the middle watch, his one eye shooting fiery glances at the opaque blackness to windward, at the tangle of straining cordage and bulging canvas aloft, at the group of men forward, huddled under the sheltering weather rail, and at the helmsman, braced against the wheel and immovable. He paused in his walk.

"Ease her when she pitches," he bellowed. And the helmsman answered and assumed life.

He resumed his walk and communings, his mind going back to the fight in the slaver's hold ten years ago. Again he fought that terrible duel with sheath-knives. He thrust, parried, dodged, advanced, and retreated, watching the steely blue of his enemy's eye, feeling again the exhilaration of boiling blood, the initial tingling of the hair roots, heard again the shouts, oaths, and encouragements of his lawless shipmates, and once more buried his knife in Billings's shoulder and received the cut on his cheek in return. Again he scored, and the knife was trans-

ferred from the wounded right hand to the left. He had him now. He rushed—and Billings slipped in his own blood. On the prostrate form he pounced—one stroke would finish him. Billings had dropped his knife and he raised his own. But it came down slanting; the stroke was futile. The wounded arm had encircled his neck; his cheek was pressing the warm blood on his enemy's shirt, and then—he felt it now—came the insertion of the thumb, the smarting pain, and blinding, burning sheet of fire that marked the going out of his left eye—forever. And the strange weakness which overcame him and enabled Billings to throw him to his feet, and follow and plant that pile-driving fist blow that sent him so near to eternity. All over a sick blackbird, too, that Billings wanted to nurse. Billings might have killed him. It was his right. Yet—but he had gouged, and no man who is a man will do that. He had said he would even up, and he would. This ship, in which he was chief mate, would finish the voyage one man short.

It was in the zenith period of American shipping, in the days of short mizzenmasts, single topsails, square sterns and squarer stern windows; when the American sailor was American-born, his proudest title, Able Seaman, yet, feeling within him the potentiality of quarter-deck duty, quick to resent ill-treatment, to conspire, and even mutiny. Officers carried arms in those days, crews were trained to the use of carronades, pirates watched for, and slave-

trading considered as a slight lapse from the conventional—a little out of date and style.

Of such description was the *Athol* and her crew, outward-bound from New York on a summer voyage to Liverpool, with Captain Smith commanding, George Earp, chief mate, and one John Billings in the forecastle.

The captain appeared and joined the brooding first officer.

"Well, Mr. Earp, what do you think of the crew," he asked. "Strikes me they're a pretty good lot; don't you think so?"

"No, captain, I can't see it. They're the worst gang of soldiers, farmers, and beach-combers I ever saw together. I'm going to work them up; they need it."

The captain laughed. "There's one man who don't," he said—"Billings, the big, red-headed fellow in your watch. I heard of him ashore; came home mate with old Johnson in the *Trade Wind;* been mate in that employ five years now; would have gone out in command this time only he had a bad row with old Johnnie, who got the owners down on him. My brother used to sail with him in the slave-trade. Billings has an ungovernable temper; you'll have to look out for that. How the slave-trade counts against a man nowadays! Call me if it freshens."

The mate was alone again. His accidental and unnecessary proposition to work up the men, coupled with the mention of Billings's hasty temper, gave

form to his speculations. Billings knew his place and work too well ever to put himself in the way of punishment, but, worked up with the rest, he would probably join them in rebellion. Then, as one of a mutinous crew, he could be disposed of. He would make sure of that.

Next day the working up began. All hands were kept on deck in the afternoon. Unnecessary repetition of orders, oaths, epithets, and insults followed the crew as they hurried around the deck or worked in the rigging. Man after man was sent from the wheel until Billings took the helm, when even the critical mind of the mate could find no fault with the steering. No matter how suddenly he appeared at the binnacle, he only found the ship on her course—exactly. And Billings, though always respectful, did not hesitate occasionally to fix the calm, open, blue eyes on the scowling visage of the mate in an expressionless stare—not too prolonged, yet enough to crowd the evil heart into the throat and stifle the words of abuse he longed to utter. There had been no further recognition between the two.

At the end of a week the exasperated men were ripe for mutiny and murder, which Billings's influence alone prevented. One night as they hauled and panted like overladen horses on the fore-brace, and the mate stood amidships pouring forth volleys of invective and malediction, a marline-spike whizzed past his ear from the darkness near the fore-rigging and buried itself an inch deep in the woodwork of

the cabin. He fired his pistol forward, but struck no one. It was not Billings who had thrown it, as he had hoped on the moment. Billings was perched on the rail looking forward. But Billings was the one man there who had seen the missile thrown, and in the forecastle discussion which followed took a position against such methods, losing, thereby, his ascendency over his mates, and only regaining it by knocking down the marline-spike thrower and two other opponents.

"If the time comes," he said, "when we will be justified in the courts, you'll find me ready to put the after-guard in irons and take the ship home. Meanwhile I've no desire to hang or go to prison."

But Billings himself was not infallible.

Sitting astride the extreme end of the maintopsail-yard, passing and heaving out the weather reef-earing while his fellows on the foot-rope lifted the sail out to him, he listened one night to the copious flow of impersonal abuse which the strident voice of the mate carried up to them. And when his name was called, coupled with a foul epithet, the heaver in his hand swung above his head, whirled downward, struck the deck at the mate's feet and bounded high in air over the lee rail. Then the vicious bark of a pistol was heard and a dim gray cloud of smoke followed the heaver to leeward.

Billings rolled backward, and with limbs extended, straight and stiff, turned slowly over as he fell, and disappeared in the water, feet first, close to the side

of the ship—close enough to be saved by a rope had he appeared and one been thrown.

Putting his smoking pistol in his pocket, Mr. Earp cut short the chuckle in his throat to roar out, "Reef that sail; finish that job, you lubbers." As they were anything but lubbers they finished it.

Of what need to describe the mutiny which followed. A captain, two mates, and a steward, armed with shot-guns and helped by a carpenter with a formidable broad-axe, can, as a rule, quell any mutinous uprising of unarmed sailors that may occur. This is what happened, and, with three wounded men in the forecastle, discipline was restored. But a stormy discussion took place in the cabin between Captain Smith and the first officer, fragments of which reached the ears of the man at the wheel, and the working up ceased.

About ten o'clock on a calm, sultry evening, about a week after, the first officer and the steward descended into the half-deck with a lantern, to discover the whereabouts of certain cabin stores which the former had stowed in port.

"I put them here," said the mate, "close up to the cabin trunk; you must have broken them out."

"No. You know I've given you pilot-bread so far at the table; and it's only to-day that the captain asked for soda-biscuits; I haven't seen them, though I knew we had them."

"Let's look along the wing—forward."

The mate went ahead with the lantern. At the

extreme forward corner of the half-deck his under jaw dropped, his hair stiffened, and the lantern fell from his nerveless fingers and went out. For, as the circle of light illumined the bulkhead, a tall, gray figure had arisen to full height, the pale face surmounted by a shaggy crop of red hair, the forehead crossed by a long, red mark—the figure and face of the murdered Billings.

With a squawk of terror the steward fled, and the mate followed. Up the ladder they bounded, the steward turning aft, the mate forward. The latter looked back; the pale, scarred face was just appearing above the hatch. Possessed by blind, unreasoning fear, he bounded down to the main-deck and looked again. The tall figure was coming—giant-like in the darkness—noiseless and gray. With a gasping gurgle, that only by effort he raised to a scream, he ran on. The crew saw, and scattered to the other side of the deck. Forward, around the fore hatch, went the mate and the silent gray pursuer. Aft on the other side, dispersing the crew again; up the steps to the poop, around the cabin, the mate uttering hoarse, jerky screams and the terrible thing keeping up the steady, noiseless pursuit, just a fathom behind. The captain, aroused by the steward, appeared, only to shrink back out of the way as the pair passed the cabin door. Forward they went again. The mate, evidently growing weaker, stumbled, fell, arose, and went on, the figure pausing, only to resume the pursuit.

Forward—aft—forward again—the mate falling at intervals, the gray Nemesis always waiting—always maintaining an even six feet behind, the frightful race went on, until the terrorized first officer mounted the taffrail, and with a last, agonizing shriek sprang overboard, the shriek ringing in the ears of the others until the water cut it short. The gray apparition followed. Neither was seen again.

There was a dearth of soda-biscuits on the cabin table until the ship was docked at Liverpool. Not a man aboard would enter the half-deck.

As Captain Smith came down the edge of the quay late one night, he saw one of the *Athol's* stern windows open. This was strange; it should be shut. A white face appeared in it, then a gray form which slowly, and with great effort, climbed down the rudder pendants, hooked up to the transom, and slipped into the water.

"That's our ghost," muttered the captain; "but ghosts don't need to climb or swim. It's Billings."

"That you, Billings? Come in; I'll help you out."

"Help! I'm drowning," gurgled the swimmer. Captain Smith hurriedly removed the gangway ladder and, dropping it over, assisted the exhausted man to safety. It was Billings in gray underclothes and stockings.

"Now, Billings," said he to the prostrate man, "by all reason and logic, you should be half-way to the bottom, a thousand miles out, with a bullet through

your head. How is it that you are climbing out of my stern windows to-night?"

"Because I went in them, captain. The mate's bullet glanced, but it knocked me off the yard and I went under the bottom. When I came up I was under the quarter and hung on to the rudder. Then I climbed the rudder pendants, found a window loose enough to open, and got in. I was stronger then; biscuits and tank water weaken a man. I've been in the half-deck since."

"Except when you played ghost. So that's where our biscuits went!"

"I didn't mean to drown the mate, captain. I thought the jig was up when he found me, and I wanted one good knock down before I went in irons; then I saw how scared he was and kept it up, but I never saw him after he struck the water or I would have helped him. I knew he couldn't swim; we've been shipmates before. Then I caught the rudder again and climbed in."

"Billings, my brother is in port, and I've just left him. He told me about the trouble you had with Earp some time ago. Come aboard and get something to eat."

John Billings went home chief mate of the *Athol.*

The Magnetized Man

I

AS a practitioner and dilettante student of hypnotism, I had always thought that the so-called power lay in the weakness or suggestibility of the subject rather than in any magnetic emanations from the physical being of the operator. Since my experience with Dart, however, even though I have read up and heard all that is expounded on the matter, I have been compelled to change my mind, or at least to admit my ignorance. It is proven that the muscles of the body give out the newly discovered N-rays; and the positive, projective, oppressing power of some personalities may be contained in these rays or they may not; I do not know. Neither does Dart, nor Braisted, nor Fanton, nor any one concerned in the case—least of all did the man whose possession of this strange power, and irresponsible use of it, brought about my change of heart.

He was a small, insignificant-looking fellow, and, excepting for a trick of carrying his eyes wide open —which created a preponderance of white in the

general effect—he had not an ounce of individuality about him. A shifty, cowardly, ignorant, and underbred man he seemed, and he occupied the berth of second cook on Braisted's big steam-yacht.

Braisted was like his yacht, big and well-appointed, which is description enough of him. Fanton deserves more, and Dart still more. Fanton was an invalid under my care. Though decidedly stout, he was a sufferer from dyspepsia. Dart was his antithesis, slender and handsome, with the mind of a poet and the bearing of an army officer, with a luminous, dark eye that looked you through and through and a smile that went straight to your heart. Like Braisted, he was wealthy, a lawyer, and a yacht-owner; but, with Fanton and myself, he was a guest on board Braisted's *Nautilus* during the club's last official cruise down the Sound.

We were lying anchored overnight at New London. The quiet old river was alive with launches and gigs, passing between the yachts and the shore, and the evening display of search-lights had not begun. We sat, all but Fanton, who was in his room below, in big deck-chairs on the fantail and discussed hypnotism. Braisted talked with utter ignorance of the subject but intense interest in it; Dart with the smiling superiority of manner peculiar to the fellow who cannot be hypnotized—you know him—and I with the cautious yet cocksure non-assertiveness of medical men—you know us—when not quite sure of themselves.

Dart said he would like to meet the man who could put him to sleep against his will, and as he said so, I mentally approved of his stand. With his flashing eye, his vibrant intonation, his whole godlike personality, he seemed the pure embodiment of soul, will, intellectual force. But the listening steward, a favored factotum of Braisted's, volunteered the information that the second cook could mesmerize the men forward, and the eager Braisted demanded a trial.

"Can you hypnotize people?" he asked, when De Cler, looking uncomfortable in a hurriedly donned white jacket, had shuffled aft from the galley. "Put them to sleep, I mean?"

"Oui, monsieur, eet is vary simple, "answered De Cler — a Frenchman, evidently — in a half-defiant, half-embarrassed manner.

"Try to put this gentleman to sleep."

Braisted jerked his thumb towards Dart. The fellow approached him—and it was here that the first thought of radiant energy entered my head, for even as he approached the smile left the face of Dart. Then, as De Cler stood over him and brought his own raised hands down with a sweeping motion, Dart's eyelids closed and his head sank back. He was asleep!

I shivered at the uncanny exhibition, but Braisted was jubilant.

"Make him do stunts," he ordered. "Make him dance!"

Braisted seemed to be hypnotized himself. Against my earnest protest, he encouraged that dull, thick-witted potato-peeler to play football with one of the keenest intellects of the New York bar. He had Dart down on his knees, believing himself a scrub-woman scrubbing a floor. He made him ride a vicious horse in the shape of a capstan-bar, prancing about the deck in imitation of a bronco's bucking. He put him into a boat, gave him imaginary oars, and made him row with empty hands, fast and furiously. Then he got him to his feet and paused a moment, thinking, I suppose, of the next outrage, when fat Fanton appeared, wheezing and grunting, at the head of the companion-stairs.

"See zat man—you see him?" said the Frenchman, boldly. "He is ze offisaire—you see?—ze policeman. Eet is propare wiz a policeman pull ze nose—you see? You pull ze nose, and zen you—ah—you keel him—you give him ze lead!"

Dart's eyes were wide open now, and except for their slight fixity of expression he looked wide-awake. He stepped quickly up to the unsuspecting invalid, seized him by the nose, and tweaked it viciously. Fanton, gritting his teeth in pain, struck out wildly with open hand and knocked Dart off his feet. He was not hurt—I knew that—but he lay twitching all over for a moment, and then arose, still full of tremors, utterly bewildered, but awake.

Braisted came to his senses and ordered the scoundrel forward. He went, slouching and grinning,

while Fanton, as embarrassed and remorseful as a dyspeptic may be, apologized profusely to Dart, who only shuddered and turned away. Braisted and myself assisted the victim to a chair. Later, he took to his berth, and on the run down to Newport I had on hand the worst case of nervous shock that ever came into my practice. He knew nothing of what had occurred from the time the Frenchman had approached him until he found himself on the deck, wincing under the open-handed blow that had floored him. And in spite of Fanton's genuine sorrow and remorse, he would not, could not, forgive him. He left for New York by train at Newport, and here the Frenchman was discharged. I do not think they met again.

I received significant reports on De Cler when I investigated his standing on board. One was from Braisted, who admitted that he felt slightly dizzy when he talked with him. Another came from Fanton, who said that, having risen early that day, he had gone to the galley for his morning drink of hot water, and had received impudence from the second cook. Another was from the first mate, who a few days before had gone for the cook, as he expressed himself, "hell bent for election," to rebuke him more or less forcibly for spilling grease on the deck, and had found himself mildly informing the offender that it was not his fault. Still another, from the crew, was that the cook could not master every one forward; some were immune.

What was the nature of his power? That was the question that troubled me. It was not the subjectiveness of his victim, for Dart was strong, masterful, resistant, and able himself to hypnotize any ordinary judge and jury. It was, perhaps, some kind of material emanation, or a radiant energy, and like all such it decreased in force as the square of the distance. It had dazed Braisted at ten feet, stupefied Dart at three, and changed the mood of a big and angry first mate while he ran down its lines of force. Yet I had looked the fellow squarely in the eyes without feeling it.

II

Fanton's dyspepsia improved somewhat on that sea-trip, but a month of New York cookery threw him back, and I had a daily complaint from him. In one of these talks he showed me a newspaper account of two similar offences against law and order, perpetrated in different parts of the city, by two persons of different social position—one by a drunken Frenchman named François de Cler in front of a sailors' boarding-house on Cherry Street; the other by a tall, well-dressed gentleman on Fifth Avenue. Each had pulled the nose of a policeman; but while the Frenchman had been clubbed into respect for convention and then jailed, the other had escaped arrest by profuse apologies to the officer and by

hurrying into a passing cab. His name was not known.

"Dart!" we both exclaimed together.

"And I've remembered since," said Fanton, a little peevishly, "that part of the cook's insolence that morning consisted in twisting his fingers in my face and calling me a 'polisman goddam.'"

"Heavens alive, man!" I exclaimed. "the suggestion to pull noses was not removed when you wakened him. Is this post-hypnotic suggestion? Is Dart still under a drunken lunatic's influence?"

"Don't know and don't care," grumbled my dyspeptic. "I've my own troubles."

"What did you say to anger the cook?" I asked, ignoring his plaint.

"Ordered him to give me some hot water."

"You should have asked. A cook is king in the galley."

I left him with his troubles and hunted for Dart; but he was not at his office, his home, nor any of his clubs. Then I investigated the Frenchman, and found that he had been sent to Blackwell's Island for a month.

"He's down on de p'lice," said the bartender of the sailors' boarding-house. "He wuz gittin' his head clubbed off wanst, an' he won out by hangin' on to one copper's nose an' shuttin' off his wind. It's his bug, see?"

With De Cler safe for a month, and Dart out of reach, I had time to devote a little thought to

Fanton's case. I came to the unprofessional but common-sense conclusion that a dyspeptic who would not diet was better off without treatment. So, with regard to his improvement on the club cruise, I ordered a long sea voyage and washed my hands of him.

Then, in his place, I had Dart for a patient. He entered my office one day in a state of evident mental collapse.

"What is the matter with me?" he asked, in a choked voice. "I did it again—the third time! I do not feel it coming on; I seem to be my natural self; then I awake in the act. I am prevented from accomplishing it, of course, and this brings me back. But why, why do I want to pull a policeman's nose?"

"Because that was suggested to you when hypnotized by the French cook, and it was not removed before Fanton wakened you," I said, confidently. "Your case is simple, Dart. You want another operation and a counter-suggestion."

"Can you hypnotize me and give the suggestion?"

"No, it's out of my line. I'll send you to the specialists."

I gave him a list of six physicians who used hypnotic suggestion in their practice, and he left with it. Then I wrote to all, asking results. As the days wore on they responded, one after another. He could not be hypnotized without the aid of drugs, and then refused the suggestion. This was not

hypnosis—it was plain drugging. Dart came back to me with the same report.

"There is one man who can do it," I said, "but he's in jail—the cook."

"No!" he almost shrieked. "No! That wretch? Not to save my soul. I'll win yet. I'll conquer myself!"

"I hope you can," I remarked.

"I'll tell you, doctor," he said, a little more calmly. "I feel confident that it is within the scope of my own will. I've passed dozens of policemen lately—even gone out of my way to pass them—and have not felt the impulse. And I've even warmed towards Fanton. We're friends now. I know I'm tired out—utterly worn out with work and worry. I'll take a vacation—order the yacht ready for a Mediterranean cruise—yes, and on through the canal, across to Australia. And why not around the world, with a party of congenial friends? I've the time and the money."

"Go ahead," I responded. "Fresh air and change, with your own will-power, may pull you out of this."

A week later Fanton informed me on the street that he had employed his own private physician—a young chap just out of his hospital service, I afterwards learned—and that he would take him abroad with him. I sent my bill and thought no more of Fanton until I read their names as the only guests on Dart's steam-yacht, which that day had sailed for Gibraltar.

Then a gabbling mutual friend at the club, who had seen them off, retailed the news that Dart, just before stepping into his gig after Fanton, had tweaked the nose of the dock policeman, and, as the gig pulled away, had jokingly performed the same feat on the nose of Fanton. I sat up all that night studying psychology and the phases and vagaries of the subconscious mind. One of the things that appealed to me so strongly that I read it again and again was, that a suggestion given to a hynotized person is never completely ignored; but that if two are given together, the subconscious mind will perform the easier task first and take up the more difficult one later. This naturally brought me to a close consideration of the suggestion delivered to Dart, and little by little it came clearly to my mind, word for word, as the cook had spoken:

"You pull him nose, and then you—ah—you keel him—you give him the lead!"

Here was a second suggestion with a vengeance! Dart had performed the first successfully, and might repeat it as long as Fanton would submit. But the second? He had warmed towards Fanton, whom he disliked intuitively, and had taken him—a man whose soul yearned for medicine—and a young fool doctor on a voyage around the world. Much might happen on that voyage.

But another point upon which all the authorities were agreed was that no suggestion to commit crime would avail against the ever-acting auto-suggestion

of the subject—that an honorable man or woman could not be hypnotized into doing a dishonorable act. And this gave me comfort until I had reflected upon the peculiar nature of Dart's hypnosis, which was not of the kind upon which this presumption was based, but an obsession driven into his soul against his will. If the auto-suggestion of Dart's whole dignified life could not save him from the absurd and ridiculous, could it save him from crime? The thought was too disquieting.

Before breakfast I called up Braisted on the telephone and explained. He was too busy to act he said; but he placed his big, fast steam-yacht at my disposal, and by night she was off Twenty-Sixth Street, coaled and provisioned, waiting for me. But I wanted more—the Frenchman—and this involved a few days' delay, until his time expired. I interviewed my friend the bartender, and made the acquaintance of the three "runners" of the sailors' boarding-house. They were three as cheerful and unsavory scoundrels as I had ever looked upon, but they served me faithfully; for hardly had De Cler imbibed his second glass of stimulant on the evening of his release than the drug he had taken with the first glass took effect, and he fell into the hands of my runners—later into mine. They delivered him at the starboard gangway shortly before midnight, and one of them also delivered himself of this gem of the language:

"Dat frozen eye o' his ain't no good, boss, if he's

scared. A tap on de snoot puts it out o' c'mission, see?"

I saw. One of the fundamentals of all suggestion is a confident bearing. But the big first mate, as he bundled the inanimate form into the chart-room, remarked, significantly:

"I'll remember!"

III

By morning we were out of sight of land, heading the Great Circle course for Gibraltar. According to the captain and mate, both of whom were in my confidence, the *Nautilus* was larger than Dart's *Javelin*, and better by fifty horse-power, twenty revolutions, and three knots' speed; so we hoped to overtake her.

I interviewed De Cler as soon as the drug was out of his brain. I found him sullen and uncommunicative until I had driven it into his understanding that if he did not answer my questions, and agree to do as I wished, I would have him dropped over the side in the night. He then opened his heart to me. He knew nothing of the nature of his strange power, nor of its effects when abused. Some men he could not influence in the least. Mr. Fanton and myself were in this class. He hated policemen because they invariably ill-treated him. He had hated Mr. Fanton for abusing him at the galley door (Fanton, it seemed, had not told all). He was willing, if he could, to

undo the harm done to Mr. Dart, provided he was not to be further punished. And to this I agreed, and supplemented the concession with the promise of a hundred dollars in cash if he succeeded. Then I released him, gave him the run of the afterpart of the deck, but forbade him to speak to any of the crew or attempt to use his power on board.

I came to the conclusion, during this talk, that De Cler was of unsound mind; but a later interview with the mate convinced me that this could have no real bearing on the final result to be attained.

The mate was a practical man, not a theorist. In spite of my admonition to De Cler, he had again, perhaps unconsciously, turned his magnetic optics on the officer, to the latter's great discomfort. At their next contact the practical mate approached from behind, collared him, shook him about at the end of his long, powerful arm — literally wiped the deck with him—and then dared him to repeat the insolence.

The experiment succeeded. The Frenchman's power over the mate was gone.

"The runner was right, sir," said the mate. "It's only bluff, after all. Frighten him, and he's no good."

There is no need of detailing the events of that three months' chase of the *Javelin* from port to port. She proved faster than our captain and mate sup-

posed. She was gone when we reached Gibraltar, but had left behind a young man, whom I met on the quay. He informed me that he had been private physician to Mr. Fanton, a guest of the *Javelin*, but had been discharged—on the instigation, he suspected, of the owner, who was undoubtedly crazy, but who still possessed a powerful hypnotic influence over Mr. Fanton.

This was interesting, and I questioned the youngster. Yes, Mr. Dart, crazy as he was, needed but to look into the eyes of Mr. Fanton, and the latter would go instantly to sleep. When roused, he would implicitly obey Mr. Dart, even to discarding the treatment that the young doctor had prescribed for his gastritis, and taking medicine provided by the owner. Yes, Mr. Fanton's dyspepsia had become acute gastritis. He was glad to be clear of the case.

The orders given—the suggestions—the implicit obedience? Why, he did not know; it was some kind of hypnotic power, no doubt, because he himself would get dizzy when Mr. Dart looked at him. He did not like it, and took no interest in such things. Mr. Dart was always saying to Mr. Fanton, "Give him the lead!" Pure lunacy, this.

I pondered long and heavily on what the youngster had said while we stormed down the Mediterranean under forced draught. Had De Cler imparted some of his peculiar power to Dart, as a strong magnet will magnetize a blank piece of steel? Was the contagion

of insanity brought about in this manner? Was Dart getting De Cler's lunacy by telepathy? *Was* he insane?

IV

This last question was answered by Dart himself when we boarded the *Javelin* in the Strait of Sunda, after a wild chase through the Suez Canal and across the Indian Ocean. We found her lying off Anjer Point, dropped anchor close by, and boarded her—the mate, the Frenchman, and myself—in the gig.

"I'm mighty glad you've come, doctor," said the skipper, in a low voice, as he welcomed us at the gangway. "Things have gone all wrong aboard here, but I can't do anything."

A ghastly, emaciated wreck of a man sat aft in a deck-chair and stupidly regarded us. I could hardly recognize the features of Fanton. Dart stood beside him, almost as changed as was Fanton—thinner, with a strange look of curiosity and suspicion on his face, and the ordinary wrinkles of his forehead deepened and accentuated by the habitual lifting of his eyebrows. Too much white showed in his eyes; they looked like De Cler's.

This worthy—clean, fat, and tractable, in better mental and physical health, thanks to my care of him, than ever he had been in his life—stood behind me, and behind him stood the mate, ready, I knew,

at a moment's notice to assert the domination of matter over mind, should he find it necessary.

Leaving them, I advanced towards Dart and Fanton. The expressionless stare of Fanton underwent no change, but Dart's eyes suddenly blazed with insane recognition, and he seized my extended hand.

"Didn't expect you so soon," he chattered, "but you're welcome, old man—yes, you are! What did you come for, anyhow? I didn't need you. I've cured myself. I don't pull noses now—no sir, no more of that! Cured myself! Pure will-power! Some of the hair of the dog! And I'm curing Fanton. Oh, he was a sick man, doctor! I can put him to sleep any time I like, and then his gastritis doesn't bother him—he has a chance to get well, you see, and then—I've told him—told him—you know—he's going to give him the lead!"

I reached over my shoulder and beckoned to the Frenchman. As he approached, Dart's wild eyes rested upon him and grew smaller, while a look of abject terror came over his wasted features. He made no sound—only stood, drooping and cowering before the strange power inherent in the cook's personality. It was an uncanny exhibition — too much for the practical first mate.

"None o' that!" he said, sharply, digging De Cler in the ribs.

It was a momentary respite for Dart. He backed away, pulled a pistol from his pocket, and, running to

Fanton, placed it in one of the hands resting nervelessly on his knee. The fingers hardly clutched it, and Fanton gave no sign of understanding. He was deep in hypnotic sleep.

"Give him the lead—the lead, Fanton!" whispered Dart.

"Go ahead, De Cler," I commanded, with one eye on that pistol. "Let us end this!"

De Cler was well instructed, and this time the mate let him alone. He brought his raised hands down before Dart's twitching face, as he had done months before, and the unhappy man's eyes almost instantly closed, though he remained standing.

"You will not nevair again pull any nose," said the Frenchman. "You will not kill anybody—you will not give the lead. You wake up!"

Dart opened his eyes. Fanton gave a spasmodic grunt, and endeavored to rise, but sat down again, while the pistol slid between his knees and rested on the seat of the deck-chair.

They had wakened together; but it was Dart who demanded my immediate attention. His face was a picture of utter bewilderment. He looked around at the shores of the strait, the dingy town half hidden in the bush, at the anchored ships and steamers, up and down the deck of his yacht, and then at me, whom he recognized seemingly for the first time.

"Explain this, please," he said, evenly, in the old-time voice that I knew. "This isn't the *Nautilus*—it's the *Javelin*. I thought we were at New London.

Where are we now? Where's Braisted?" His eye rested on De Cler, who, his task done, was leaning against the rail. "Have I been hypnotized?"

His active mind had hit upon the truth, though of course with no regard to the lapse of time.

"Yes, Dart," I answered, "but everything is all right. I'll explain presently. Sit down." He obeyed me, and I turned to Fanton, who was leaning over, his hands clasped to his stomach, and groaning bitterly, while perspiration ran down his face. "What's the matter with you," I asked, jovially, as a matter of habit when asking that question, for I was perspiring myself.

"Oh, my stomach!" he wailed. "Shall I never get over this dyspepsia?"

"Dyspepsia?" I answered. "I heard it was gastritis. Open your mouth. Let me see your tongue."

I looked into the cavern. It was a sight to startle a physician under any circumstances. It robbed me of my self-control and my caution. His gums were blue!

"Good Heavens!" I said. "You're poisoned. You're full of it! Hold up your hands!"

He held up both arms, but the hands hung down supinely. Only by an extreme effort could he move them, and then they shook and clutched almost beyond his control.

"He has been dosing you with acetate of lead for three months," I said. "You've got lead colic and

wrist drop. It's a wonder you're alive. Oh, he gave you the lead, surely!"

"Poisoned!" gasped Fanton, stiffening up. "Who —who poisoned me?"

"Dart," I answered. "But I can pull you through, Fanton. Don't worry."

His mind, barely awake, could grasp nothing else. Dart, whom he never liked, had poisoned him. His indignation overcame the sense of pain. His fingers steadied, and his right hand moved down towards the pistol that only his subconscious mind knew of.

He cocked it and rose to his feet, while we scattered—all of us, even Dart. For the cocked weapon was being waved about by a palsied hand and arm animated through diseased motor nerves by a brain bent upon murder.

"Dart!" spluttered Fanton. "Poisoned me! Where is he? Stand still, there! Now, die, you dog!"

No doubt he thought he was aiming at Dart, but the bullet went off almost at right angles, and De Cler fell without a sound—shot through the heart. Fanton had obeyed the suggestion. He had given him the lead!

The investigation of the shooting by the authorities ashore, the disposal of the body, and the run home in the *Javelin*, during which I nursed two sick but sane men back to health, add nothing to the unsolved problems of this case. Only one thing more

may be mentioned. Fanton, who swooned as the Frenchman fell, remembered nothing of the shooting, though he had a dim, dreamlike memory of the voyage out with Dart. But why?

The Mistake

I

THOUGH the big cruiser's speed gave the semblance of a twenty-knot breeze on deck, there was really no wind. The sea lay smooth save where the two bow waves—billows of phosphorescent foam where they began—stretched away to starboard and port like twin tails to a comet, and where the water thrown up by the screws swirled and twisted astern in currents of liquid flame. On each side, between the bow wave and the wake, and keeping pace with the ship, was a moving hollow flecked with dots and serpentine lines of light — miniature constellations in an inverted liquid firmament; but there were no stars, and a thick haze hid the Manchurian coast, close at hand to the east. So, as is usual on such nights, lookouts peered keenly ahead.

Something of the weird beauty of the night got into the restless brain of the young fourth lieutenant and made him unusually wakeful. He remained on deck long after being relieved at midnight, smoking

and meditating. Drifting aft through the superstructure to the quarter-deck, where he had no business to be, he passed the two life-buoy lookouts, and stepped to the taffrail, where hung the patent log, its twisting line stretching far beyond the swirling currents of the wake to the rotator that spun off the mileage, deep in quiet water.

There was an "Irish pennant"—a clinging rope-yarn—on the log-line about five feet abaft the taffrail. It did not interfere with the spinning of the line, but it annoyed him. He could have pulled in the line, removed the yarn, and again slacked it off; or, as an officer, he could have delegated the trivial job to one of the life-buoy men within call; but the unrest of the night was on him and he did neither. He climbed over and down to the small gallery extending around the stern, where he had less business than on the quarter-deck, climbed over the railing, and, holding on with his right hand, extended his left upward and outward towards the rope-yarn.

At this moment, before he had reached it, something came into his circle of vision that made him lower his eyes. It was a sparkling cluster of points in the water over to port, distinct and brilliant, and speeding towards the ship with amazing velocity, as though caused by bursting bubbles that rose from some huge, swiftly swimming fish. But what fish could make such speed? What but—? The paralyzing thought hardly took form in his brain.

He was startled at a critical moment; his right

hand slipped its hold, and he fell, plunging head-first and backward into the sea. He struck his head on something hard when far down, and was so nearly stunned by the impact that when he found himself on the surface, paddling weakly, he had not energy to call out. The ship was a full length away from him, a dim and dwindling blur in the darkness. Its lookouts were looking ahead, and no one was aware that Lieutenant Halpin had fallen overboard.

He was young, strong, and a swimmer. The sea was smooth and the coast to the east but two miles away. Floating on his back and resting after his first frantic efforts, he drew comfort from the rising full moon. Until it had reached the meridian it would guide him east. With some difficulty he shed his shoes and outer clothing; then, husbanding his strength, he began what promised to be a four-hour swim.

But it ended in an hour, just about the time the moon ceased to be a guide, and before the coast was in sight through the haze. A long, dark object appeared ahead of him. At first it looked like an overturned boat, but, as he swam closer, it resolved itself into a partly submerged cylinder of steel, one end round and blunt, the other an elongated cone. His professional knowledge enabled him to identify it on sight, and the unborn, paralyzing thought that had followed his first glimpse of the speeding points of light now found birth and expression.

"It's a Whitehead torpedo!" he exclaimed.

Then came other thoughts, as he felt of the bump on his head.

"It made the bubbles. I fell right in its way. It was sent at the ship and it missed, but—what sent it? Something out of sight in the haze? How far? I've swum at least a mile, and that's as far as these things travel."

Additional speculations as to the improbability of any craft torpedoing a cruiser of the United States did not enter his mind; he was still a little dazed by the shock of the fall and the blow. But, swimming to the blunt nose, he unscrewed the little propeller wheel that brought the firing-pin to place; then, knowing that the two hundred pounds of explosive was safe from detonaton, he mounted the mechanical sea-horse, which, with sixty-nine pounds of compressed air expended, was now buoyant enough to bear him waist high out of water.

Familiar with the mechanism of the terrible weapon, he investigated in the darkness and found the starting-lever up, automatically locking the engine, and the water-tripper, which gave full speed to the air-engine within, flat down on the curved steel-hull. Reversing both, the latter first, he found that the tandem-screws in the stern revolved slowly.

Satisfied that there was still compressed air in the chamber, and that the torpedo could carry him shoreward, he waited for the moon overhead again to be-

come a guide. But by the time it had reached a definite westerly position the haze had risen and obliterated it, and he waited longer, until sunrise, when the haze cleared away and showed him the shore not too far off, and, seaward about a quarter of a mile, what seemed to be a buoy—a cask on end, with a slim pole or mast rising from it. But from the top of this casklike object extended a man's head and shoulders, and as it slowly approached, propelled by some hidden motive power, Halpin made out that the man was Japanese, his almond eyes nearly circular with astonishment.

"How you swim?" he asked, as the curious cylinder, which Halpin now saw was of finely machined steel, stopped close by. "What you got?"

"I've got a Whitehead torpedo," said Halpin, cheerfully, splashing the water to maintain his balance. "What have you got?"

"This a submarine boat. I look for torpedo. I fire it last at Russian. It missed, and it is valuable. I am far from my base."

"Russian be hanged," said Halpin. "You fired at the United States cruiser *Syracuse*, but all you did was to scare me overboard. Don't you know a Russian from a Yankee?"

"You belong to that ship? You fall overboard, you say?"

"Yes, and found this toy. What have you got there—a submarine?"

"Yes—and I say, can you help? I trim by the stern and take the torpedo in the tube?"

"Yes, I'll help, if you'll take me in, too. I'm chilled through."

II

The Jap called down a few words in his own language; then, while a curved forward-deck and pointed nose rose out of the sea, two other Japs came up and plunged overboard. These, with Halpin's assistance, backed the torpedo into one of two launching-tubes that pierced the steel hull each side and above the pointed nose, and which, from their position and the eyelid action of the shutters that closed them, gave a facelike appearance to the boat's bow. Then they assisted Halpin himself, numb in the legs from the long exposure, up the curved deck to the conning-tower, where the first Jap, an intelligent-looking fellow with a lieutenant's insignia, welcomed him politely and invited him down the hatch-ladder.

"First submarine I've been into," said Halpin, as he looked around from the foot of the ladder at the maze of pipes, valves, and indicators lining the curved steel walls that enclosed him, "though I've studied the subject. How do you manage about dry clothes—when you fall out of this thing?"

"I give you a change," said his rescuer, only a slight movement of his beady eyes responding to

Halpin's attempts at humor. "I have one undress coat—your service buttons. I got at Annapolis, where I study."

"Well, if you've studied there," said Halpin, "how'd you make such a mistake last night? Don't you know the *Syracuse?* There's nothing like her in the Russian navy."

"The *Retvizan.* I look for her. Three funnels, two masts, quarter-gallery. How you fall overboard?"

"Yes—a quarter-gallery. It's a Cramp feature, but a dozen ships of any nation have quarter-galleries. It's where I fell from. If you'd looked close you'd have seen me, and I'm no Russian."

"My eyes very bad," said the commander, pointing to his beady optics. "I break my glasses yesterday."

"Well," rejoined Halpin, "better trust to some other man's eyes then. If you'd torpedoed Uncle Sam's cruiser last night there'd be trouble ahead for Japan. But isn't the *Retvizan* on the bottom at Port Arthur?"

"No," said the other. "She is repaired, and come out. We look for her."

While talking, the commander had brought out a complete change of clothing, and Halpin was soon dry clad and comfortable. There was no privacy; it was one long, electric-lit, arched compartment, in the forward end of which were the torpedo-tubes, in the after, the engine and motor. As Halpin dressed,

the commander mounted to the conning-tower, and the rest, including the engineers, busied themselves in hauling out of the tube the rescued torpedo, to recharge it with compressed air. Halpin was dressed before this was accomplished, and then the men—seven beady-eyed Orientals as near alike as brothers—ranged themselves on fixed sitting-places along the steel interior.

Two remained forward, seated on the twin tanks beside the torpedo-tubes; one, evidently a quartermaster, took a position at the diving-gear—the wheel that controlled the horizontal rudder—near the conning-tower; and the other four, engineers and electricians, squatted aft near the engine and dynamo. The intricate system of piping, levers, and valves lining the steel shell was so arranged that each man could do his work without moving far from his sitting-place, thus maintaining the horizontal trim of the boat. And to this end Halpin, at a gesture from the quartermaster, had seated himself amidships on a chest from which his change of clothes had come. When the boat, at a bell and a jingle from the commander, had taken motion under the gasolene engine, and the latter had called down to the quartermaster to relieve him, the two merely changed places, the latter taking up the wet clothing to dry out on the deck. Halpin needed his own, for his six feet of length and eighteen inches breadth of shoulder could barely squeeze into the small garments furnished him.

"Where are you bound now?" he asked, as the commander sat down and faced him. "Any place where I can get out and join my ship? She's bound for New-Chwang."

"No, you will not join your ship until the war ends. You have learned of the existence of this boat, and Japan's policy is to keep it secret."

"What?" asked Halpin, in amazement. "Will you detain an officer of the United States navy?"

"I could not take your support from under you and leave you to drown, so I rescued you. Is not that enough?"

Halpin looked steadily into the stolid face of the Jap, while his own hardened.

"Yes," he said, slowly, "I suppose, under the circumstances, it *is* enough. You scared me overboard and then picked me up. Anything further is a matter between those higher up. What's your name? Mine is Richard Halpin, of the United States cruiser *Syracuse*."

"Sagu Matsumoro, lieutenant in the Japanese navy, in command of the submarine torpedo-boat *Hachi*."

"All right, Lieutenant Matsumoro. Now, tell me, where are you bound?"

"Around the Liaotung Peninsula, where we found our last victim."

"Victim?" inquired Halpin. "What do you mean?"

"The *Petropavlovsk*."

"What? Do you mean—this boat—wasn't it a floating-mine?"

"It was this boat," said the Jap, his beady eyes glistening. "I do not mind telling you, as you cannot divulge. This little boat, unseen, unknown to the world, sank the mighty battle-ship, and Russia and the world think it was a mine. Mine—" The Jap's face showed emotion. "What mine could hit a craft amidships that was under way?"

"By George," said Halpin, "I've thought of that. So it was you? But why don't you go into Port Arthur and torpedo them all?"

"You forget the mines. We have no chart, nor definite information. A submarine is blind under water, and in more danger than a surface boat."

"And so you lure them out. Do you think the *Retvizan* is out?"

"The *Retvizan* is repaired and has come out. She was reported in this neighborhood, but it was no doubt your ship. We will look around."

"There were others," said Halpin, "that ran on to mines—as was given out. Was that right?"

"The *Pobieda* did not."

"The *Pobieda!* What other scalps have you got?"

"The *Poltava*, the *Askold*, the *Diana*, the *Boyarin*, the *Yenesei*."

"Heavens! And you'll keep this up, I suppose, until you've cleaned up the Russian navy?"

"More. I will have abolished the armored ship in all navies. What use a battle-ship that must see

what she fights? The submarine is invisible, and strikes with the most terrible weapon."

"Can you keep the sea? What's your cruising radius?"

"Fifty miles submerged—four hundred on the surface. I must come up for air every ten days, and once in four months I must touch a base for food, water—oftener for torpedoes."

"But you must come up to see."

"No, nor to hear. We run on the surface now, until the storage-battery is charged. Then we submerge. But I show you my mechanical ear. Look —put this on."

The Jap reached down from the conning-tower a flexible tube with ear-plugs, such as is worn by telephone-girls, and by a gesture to the engineer stopped the engine. In the hush that followed, the sound of lapping water above came down through the opened hatch; but when Halpin had arranged the apparatus to his ears this gave way to a roaring sound, swelling and lessening.

"You hear the surf on the beach, two miles away," explained Matsumoro, when he had described it. "Water carries farther than air. I hear, even in storm, the beat of a steamer's screw five miles."

"What is it?"

"My own invention. I have not named it. A parabolic reflector with telephone diaphragm in the focus. I move it in azimuth by this." He showed Halpin a lever, which was also an index, that swung

horizontally beneath a compass. "It indicates the direction of the sound," he added, signalling again to the engineer.

"Good," rejoined Halpin, as he removed the ear-plugs. "I'm acquiring an immense respect for you folks. But how do you see? By a periscope, I suppose; an improvement, I'll bet!"

"My own invention, too," said the Jap, a slight gratification showing in his face. "Better than any periscope. Did you notice the circular deck surrounding the conning-tower above?"

"Yes," answered Halpin, looking upward.

"It does not show from within. It is an empty superstructure enclosing in utter darkness the screen of my panorama. The mast is a hollow tube with a lens at the top. At twelve feet depth, with but three feet of tubing above water, provided I maintain an even keel, I get a moving picture on this screen of every object—every wave and ship—within or on the horizon."

"And is it reliable, with your bad eyes?"

"Better with my bad eyes. My field of vision is close to me, and near-sightedness does not matter. Had I not trusted to the strong moonlight last night, I would not have mistaken your ship for the *Retvizan*."

"What kind of a lens," asked Halpin, thoughtfully, "will give you a circular reflection?"

"It is my secret," answered Matsumoro, with a smile.

"I beg your pardon," said Halpin. "I forget where I am—and what."

"You will know in time. I will give it to the United States when it has served Japan—also my wireless telegraphy, which transmits through the sea."

"You're a genius!" exclaimed Halpin, in amazement.

"I was educated in America. I am grateful."

"And your crew? Are they enlisted men or officers?"

"Neither. They are trained by me, but not enlisted. We are brothers of the Samurai."

"The Samurai?" said Halpin. "The aristocracy of Japan?"

"Partly; but you have nothing like it in America or elsewhere. It is the military class—with traditions of honor far higher than such as can be acquired. They are inherited. One of the Samurai cannot survive failure, humiliation, chagrin."

"That's tough, in this hard, cold world," said Halpin, grimly. "You must all die young."

"Not all. I hope to live. I have never yet failed. I built this boat and contrived most of her features. I presented her to my country and was raised in rank. I have done more damage to the Russians than all of my countrymen combined. No, I have not failed."

"You came near it last night. What would you have done if you had blown the stern off the *Syracuse?*"

Matsumoro looked gravely at him, then said, slowly:

"True, I almost failed. It would have been harakiri for all, and it would never be known."

He pointed up at a short, two-handed sword hanging in the conning-tower. Halpin shuddered.

"That's disembowelling yourself. Forget it, lieutenant. We have a saying, 'If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.' I wouldn't turn myself inside out for a little thing like a cruiser. I'd say, 'Better luck next time,' and try again—for a battleship. What's the modus operandi?"

Matsumoro brightened.

"I receive my instructions," he said, with enthusiasm, "only at night, by wireless telegraphy, from the private cabin of the admiral, who alone in the fleet knows of this boat's existence. I never rise to the surface if a ship is in sight. I find my victim with the periscope. I lie in wait two fathoms down. I head across her path. At the critical moment, when her course will coincide with the course of the torpedo, these men forward apply the compressed air. Poof—whish, a torpedo is out. Poof—whish, the second is out. Then the world hears of another floating mine."

"But suppose your periscope is seen?" said Halpin. "Suppose a plunging, pointed shell comes down and punctures you? You'll drown like a rat in this thing, won't you?"

"It is one chance in a million. Yet, if so, all can

escape to the surface but one. We have practised the drill. The tubes are eighteen inches in diameter. A man may crawl in, take a long breath when the breech is closed. The water is admitted, the bow port opened, the compressed air applied, and he goes out, like a torpedo."

"And the last man remains because he cannot eject himself?" inquired Halpin.

The Jap bowed gravely.

"It would be myself, the commander," he said, simply.

"Cheerful prospect ahead for you, lieutenant, with your bad eyesight," said Halpin. "If you don't see straight, you commit suicide. If anybody sees you, you drown or suffocate. I'm not inclined towards either. May I see that periscope?"

"In a short time you shall see—all but the lens. We shall breakfast now."

III

After breakfast the electrician on duty ceased inspection of the battery register, the engineer stopped the engine and connected up the motor, the quartermaster closed the conning-tower hatch and ventilator, and then gave a turn to the diving-gear wheel, while Matsumoro mounted the steps to where his head just entered the circular opening in the arched roof of the compartment.

It was only when all 'midship lights were turned off, leaving the conning-tower in utter darkness, that Halpin realized that he was beneath the surface of the sea.

"Come up beside me on the steps," called the commander. Halpin joined him. There was just room for him to squeeze his head through the opening beside the Jap's. Above this opening was another, leading into the conning-tower proper, and between them was a lateral view of a garret-like apartment that he had not noticed when he descended—the inside of the circular superstructure-deck.

"There must be no interference of light," explained Matsumoro. "So the compass and all dials are self-illuminating and radiate very little."

Halpin barely noticed the compass-card, faintly glowing with phosphorescence beneath his nose. His attention was immediately taken with the moving panorama pictured on the inside of the circular wall. It was as brilliant as a reflection in a mirror, a complete reproduction of the sea and sky overhead within an angle of eight degrees above and below the horizon. Every shade of the moving seas was there, from the deep black of the near-by hollows to the blue-and-white of the sun-kissed crests.

The sun was out of sight above the angle of vision, but the sky, the horizon, the land to the east, and a cloud-bank to the west were as clearly defined and as natural to the eye as if looked at from the deck. To starboard, heading towards the land across the

bow of the boat, was a white cruiser with two masts, three funnels, and a quarter-gallery, every detail of gun, sponson, and deck-fitting glistening distinctly in the sunlight.

"It's wonderful!" exclaimed Halpin. "And, by George, if I know my own ship, that's the *Syracuse!* I wonder if she's looking for me! Can't you put me aboard?"

"No, I cannot catch her; and see, now she is heading south."

The pictured ship slowly turned her stern towards them, and, as they looked, grew smaller.

"She is very fast, is she not?" commented the Jap. "But you see, orientation and perspective are perfect. I cannot apply a range-finder, which is all that is lacking."

"You don't need one. This is enough; it's the greatest thing I ever saw. An ordinary periscope only takes in a few degrees. Where's the—I beg pardon!"

"The lens is out of water. Other parts are over your head, but I trust you will—"

"I won't meddle," said Halpin. "I'm grateful for what I've seen. Your side is going to win out in this fight!"

"More—we will abolish the battle-ship!"

Halpin descended and sat down in his place; and there he remained, nibbling biscuit three times a day, sleeping during the night hours, occasionally conversing with Matsumoro, watching the beady-eyed,

wooden-faced Japs at their work, and pondering ceaselessly on the chance of escape from the strange prison, for three days and nights.

Then he wakened from a morning doze to find excitement in the air and emotion showing on the faces of the crew. They were all erect, at stations, and the commander was at the wheel, his head and shoulders hidden in the darkness above the circular aperture. The 'midship lights were out, and hanging down from the conning-tower was the tubing of the under-water telephone — evidently used in a hurry and not replaced on its hook.

"What's up, lieutenant?" asked Halpin. "Found the admiral?"

Their last talk had been of this contingency.

"Yes, as you slept I found him. The fleet is in the neighborhood—just where I do not know. We are ten miles southeast of Port Arthur, and the *Retvizan* is out. That is the news I received while you slept. Listen at the telephone!"

Halpin put the plugs to his ears. He heard the chug, chug of a steamer's engines, and the vibratory pulsing of twin screws, with a muffled background of steady sound that could be nothing but the wash of the bow wave.

"Come up here," said Matsumoro. "I want your eyes and your judgment." Halpin climbed beside him. "It is very thick above—but what do you think?"

A little away on the starboard bow, as reproduced

on the screen, was a huge, gray ship heading nearly end-on towards the invisible submarine, and dimly outlined against fog almost as gray as herself. To this obscuration was added the thick, black smoke from her funnels, which, driven by a following wind under the peculiar atmospheric condition of low barometer that sometimes accompanies fog, settled down and enveloped her—an onrushing cloud, from which occasionally protruded a mast, a section of bow, with turrets, guns, and sponsons, the forward bridge or the after, the three funnels nearly in line, and an occasional glimpse of a big, white bow wave piled up before her.

"What do you think?" inquired Matsumoro. "I see three funnels and two masts with fighting-tops; but I cannot see more. Has she a quarter-gallery? It is not the *Syracuse*—your ship. But is it the *Retvizan?*"

"Don't know," said Halpin, studying the picture. "It's foggy out-doors, isn't it? That's a battle-ship, surely. See the size of the forward turret. I never saw more than a photograph of the *Retvizan*, but, if I remember rightly, she has inset extensions to her funnels."

"Soon we shall see. I am looking for the quarter-gallery."

"Don't bank too heavily on that feature, lieutenant," said Halpin. "Your big ship *Hatsuse* carries one—I saw her at Hong-Kong. Don't blow up your countrymen!"

"I know," said Matsumoro, a little petulantly. "It is not likely that I mistake my own country's ship."

"I should hope not," answered Halpin, dryly. "Yet you didn't know the *Syracuse*."

"In the moonlight, no. On my panorama, yes."

The picture on the screen grew larger, the on-rushing monster not half a mile away, and heading to cross the bow of the submarine, which barely maintained steerageway under the motor. Then, far in the rear, but still more indefinite and obscure, appeared another ship, and soon another, dim blots upon the gray fog of the morning. A fleet was coming in column, but they showed no colors, and each drove before her the thick blanket of black smoke from her funnels.

A momentary lifting of the fog over to port showed other ships, merchant steamers and sailing craft. Then it closed down, thicker than before.

"I do not know," said Matsumoro, doubtingly. "Is the whole Russian fleet out from Port Arthur?"

"Looks like it," said Halpin; "if they *are* Russian. But you can't tell nowadays. Battle-ships are becoming standardized, and—by George, she's turning!"

The big war-ship had swung sharply to starboard, and Matsumoro's beady eyes glittered in the faint light from the compass-card as he gave the wheel a turn.

"They have sighted our periscope tube," he said; "and by running from the periscope they have declared themselves Russian, for they have no sub-

marines. Ah, now I see the quarter-gallery! It is the *Retvizan.*"

A momentary clearing away of the smoke plainly showed the forward end of a quarter-gallery; but before Halpin had taken fuller cognizance of the exposed details, the Japanese commander mildly hinted that there was not much elbow-room, and he descended. Soon there was an exchange of Japanese commands and answers between the commander and the four men at the torpedo-tubes; then a sharp, emphatic word from Matsumoro that a man answered by turning a lever. A whish, a cough, and a thud followed, and Halpin knew that a torpedo was out; a man opposite turned another lever, and a second whish and cough and thud announced the departure of a second torpedo.

At a call from above the engineer reversed the machinery, and while the submarine shivered and shook under the strain, Matsumoro flopped down from above, gathered his knees under him, and with his face buried in his hands lay face down on the flooring, moaning like a sobbing child. His men surrounded him, and Halpin asked:

"What's the matter?"

Matsumoro did not answer, and Halpin bounded up the ladder. The stately picture of power and majesty moved slowly along the screen, dancing slightly from the vibration of the hull, and while the men below exclaimed in their language, and called up to him loudly, he took in new details un-

folding in the moving picture, one of which was the after-funnel, showing for a brief moment through the smoke. And this funnel was a straight cylinder, with nothing of the telescopic-inset he had expected to see.

Another detail of the picture was a scintillating line of red along the dark gray of the superstructure; and even beneath the sea Halpin could hear the rattle of the secondary battery and the whistling and splashing of the sand-blast of projectiles sent at the periscope.

"Something wrong here," muttered Halpin, looking down on the group beneath. "Torpedoed the wrong ship, I suppose; but she's Russian, no doubt, or she wouldn't fire at us—though perhaps not the *Retvizan*."

He looked back at the picture, and even as he looked it disintegrated. For one fleeting instant there was a glimpse of that after-funnel rising straight upward. This was followed by flame and a great bursting wave from over the side; then the whole detailed exhibit of sea and sky and exploding battle-ship became a confused and quivering mass of color and light from the strain upon the periscope tube. At the same instant there came through the sea a thundering crash of sound, with a physical impact that pinned Halpin against the rim of the circular opening and threw every man of the crew prone upon the flooring beside the commander.

Then the dancing mass of color and light again

took form on the screen, and as those below struggled to their feet, and Halpin freed himself from the lateral pressure, it became a picture more fully of disintegration than that caused by the vibration of the tube. It was an epitome of pure destruction: a separation of riven steel and a hurtling of fragments, an apparent uplifting in the centre, a settling at the ends, a distribution of curves, and a gradual subsidence and diffusion. Men and other small dots sank downward. The inclined deck of the huge, gray hulk went deeper into the sea. Above, black-and-yellow smoke thinned and floated away.

There came another uplifting of parts, a second whirling of fragments and men, with more belching of smoke, and the utter annihilation of the after-part of the battle-ship as the second Whitehead torpedo impacted where sent. Then this shattered end sank into the sea; the bow lifted, exposing the ram and the curving forefoot. Small dots slipped and slid aft on the steep incline. The forward end of a bilge-keel came into view, and, pointing upward at an angle of fifty degrees, with fully a third of its length out of water, the great, gray monster, wounded unto death, slowly launched itself downward.

IV

With the sinking of the battle-ship the picture on the screen went out in sudden darkness; for the

secondary gunfire had not ceased where a gun and gunner stood intact, and one small shot had hit the tube of the periscope. Halpin, dodging a stream of water from the tube, was hurled to the floor by this second shock of concussion, and when he picked himself up saw Matsumoro on the ladder.

Shaken and unnerved by the fall and the scene he had witnessed, he yet would have ascended to assist in stopping the stream, but was forcibly held back by the others. When Masumoro, paying no attention to the water flooding his boat, came down the ladder, he brought with him the two-handed sword that hung in the conning-tower.

"What are you going to do?" inquired Halpin, vaguely. "You sank that ship, right enough, but it wasn't the *Retvizan*. What do you think it was? Aren't you going to stop that water?"

"It does not matter," said Matsumoro, calmly. "I have failed."

"Torpedoed the wrong ship, you mean," said Halpin, hotly. "Is that what you call failure? With all my respect for you, lieutenant, you're a fool! Are you going to sink the boat and drown us all on that account?"

Without answering him, Matsumoro turned on the 'midship lights and laid the sword on the floor before him. Then, with his wooden-faced men around him in a circle, he spoke quietly and dispassionately, without inflection or gesture, in the Japanese language for fully five minutes. Meanwhile, Halpin

watched and listened curiously, and the boat, with motor stopped, hung poised at about twenty-foot depth, its reserve buoyancy already balanced by the weight of water taken in. Then a man—it was one of the engineers—stepped forward, lifted the sword, bowed low to his commander, and before the horrified Halpin could speak or interfere he had torn open his clothing, plunged the murderous blade into his abdomen, and with a spasmodic upward slash, fell writhing to the floor in a death agony.

The others looked on impassively, and one of them picked up the sword; but before he could use it, or even kotow to the chief, Halpin wrenched it away from him, sending the man reeling to the limits of the handling-room with a fist blow in the face.

"You damnable heathen!" he said, angrily, snapping the blade across his knee. "Is this the way you settle a mistake? What do you mean—to kill yourself all around? Do you expect me to follow suit?"

"Do not interfere," said Matsumoro, steadily. "Do not dare!"

"Do not dare?" yelled Halpin, in a frenzy of rage and horror. "Well, I do dare! If another of you attempts this I'll break him in two!"

Avoiding the now quiet body on the floor, he advanced and shook his fist in the face of the commander, who cringed slightly at the potency of that fist. It was a big one; Halpin was a big man.

"As I understand this," said Halpin, as calmly as he could, "you mean to die according to your in-

fernal custom of hara-kiri. Well, I admit your right to die any time you like except when your death is a nuisance to me. What am I to do here with a lot of dead men?"

"That is a matter with which we are not concerned," said Matsumoro. "Be kind enough not to interfere."

"You put me out of this boat," said Halpin, "and then do what you like. She's sinking now. Get up to the surface and open the hatch. I'll swim. I don't want even a torpedo."

"No. Your being here is not our fault. We have failed, and according to the custom of our class we shall die; but we are not responsible for you."

"Why must I die?"

"That is not it. *We* must die quickly—immediately. We have no time to liberate you. And this boat must not be seen; there are other ships above."

"Shoot me out of the tube, I say!"

"We have no time. Stand back!"

"Not much. If you die before I do you'll die under my hands—a slow death and painful. I'll make it so!"

Then, in the presence of his crew, Halpin struck Lieutenant Sagu Matsumoro, of the Japanese navy, in the face, knocking him upon his back; and before the little man arose he had taken him by the throat.

"Will you put me out?" he demanded, as he

shook him vigorously. "You heathen, will you put me out?"

The others sprang forward bravely enough, only to quail and fall back before the menacing eyes and threatening pose of the enraged American. He whipped their commander around before them—actually using him as a weapon of offence. They yielded; the Samurai sense of honor was reduced to a commonplace sense of fear, and men willing to disembowel themselves for principle hesitated to face this mad giant. Halpin again turned to the commander.

"Will you put me out of this?" he demanded, as he shook him about. "Will you come to the surface and put me out, or will you shoot me out the tube? Speak quickly!"

Matsumoro, bleeding at the nose, with both eyes blackened and closed, was doggedly silent. Once more Halpin dealt him punishment. He held him at arm's-length and struck him with all his power again and again. Three of the others again came forward only to fall back—then Matsumoro spoke.

"I will eject you from the tube," he said, thickly, between his bruised and stiffened lips. "You cannot understand. You are a brute, an exponent of the physical. Honor, patriotism, traditions—all are lost upon you."

"Right," growled Halpin. "I'm young, and I want to live. Will you give me your word of honor—the honor of the Samurai—that if I crawl into that

tube you'll open the bow port and apply compressed air?"

"I give you my word, and I vouch for the rest. I would take you to the surface to get rid of you only that we should be sunk by gunfire. We must not drown in this exigency; but you cannot understand."

"Yes, I do. Rip your hearts out as soon as you like when I'm gone, but let me go first! I'm not interested."

"You will give me your word, as an American officer, not to divulge what you have learned in this boat?"

"No, for it will be impossible for me to keep it if I live. I shall be asked to account for my time."

Matsumoro studied his determined face for a moment, then said:

"Very well. It does not matter much. The world will know that we died as we lived—successfully."

"If I'm any judge of the world, lieutenant, it won't care, but I'll give you my word not to slander you."

The Japanese commander bowed politely. He led the way to the breech of the starboard torpedo-tube, followed by his men, whom he summoned by a gesture. They closed the bow port, blew out the water from the tube with compressed air, opened the breech-door, and stood back, waiting for Halpin to enter. He hesitated a moment, looking around at their still, impassive faces.

"I hardly know what to say," he began, "to you men, only that I'm sorry it has to be—sorry that you've made your minds up to—"

"Do not waste time," interrupted Matsumoro. "We are already three atmospheres down. Hold your fingers in your ears to protect the tympana. There will be boats. Your chance is good—but hurry. We are tired of you."

"Well, all right, if I've made you tired. Good-bye! I'm sorry for you, lieutenant. I'd taken a liking to you."

"Be sorry for the periscope. It is lost to the world."

"Of course. Good-bye!"

Shedding his borrowed garments to the underclothing he had worn when rescued, Halpin squeezed into the tube.

"Take a long breath when we close the breech-door," called Matsumoro.

"Right," Halpin answered. "Go ahead."

The breech-door closed with a clang, and he filled his lungs with air. Then, in pitch-black darkness, he heard the grinding of the bow port as it lifted, and felt the chill of the inrushing cold water. A shock followed that nearly deprived him of his senses, and the next instant he was out in the black water, with his fingers driven into his ears, and his nostrils almost torn apart by the pressure of three atmospheres.

He was one hundred feet down—he had seen this

marking on the depth indicator—and he thought that he might swim upward, using his feet, and aided by buoyancy, two feet a second. This meant nearly a minute of agony. He calculated the result as he swam. He estimated, too, that he required half a second for each kick, and that he must kick out a hundred times to make the surface. He counted as he kicked; and before ten had gone by the real agony in his lungs had begun. And this agony remained with him and increased with the lessening of the pain in his ears and nostrils.

At fifty, he dared remove one finger, to use the hand in swimming. The pain on his ear-drum prevented his releasing the other, and he swam, one-handed, towards the light. At seventy-five, with lungs bursting and eyes starting from their sockets, he valued life more than the sense of hearing, and struck out with both hands. And every moment, from the beginning of that upward swim of a hundred feet through the eternity that followed the release of the second hand, until, with his head out of water, he expelled the air from his lungs in a succession of sobs and groans, his mind was obsessed with the thought of the fatuous men he had left behind. It was not with a thought of pity, but of envy; because they need not die this terrible death by drowning.

Soon Halpin could take intelligent cognizance of the upper world to which he had returned. Treading water and resting, he saw ships of all types, naval and merchant, from the high-sided battle-ship to the

lowly Chinese junk, some under way in his direction, others stopped near at hand. Nearer to him than the nearest were boats full of men, picking up here and there a battered and bleeding swimmer. He shouted when he could, and one—a white boat that looked familiar—approached him.

"My God, sir," called the bow oarsman to the officer in the stern sheets, "it's Lieutenant Halpin!"

"Halpin!" yelled the officer, standing erect, and Halpin recognized a brother officer of the *Syracuse's* wardroom. "Where have you been? We thought you were drowned. How on earth did you get aboard the *Hatsuse?*"

The Submarine Destroyer

AT dock and at anchor in the navy-yards of the world lay the armored-leviathans, stripped of tooth and claw, preserved from rust by layers of paint and tallow, grim reminders of a barbarous past when men fought with twelve-inch guns. And abroad on all the seas roamed the craft that had stripped and banished them, the submersible, the logical development of the early submarine—a fast surface boat able to submerge and, like her parent, to strike out of the dark and the distance with a weapon as invisible as herself. But on the postulate that men cannot fight in the dark, the submersible could not fight its fellow; so war upon the sea had come to an end, and in each navy rank above the grade of lieutenant was abolished, while the navy itself became an adjunct of the consular service, Japan only, among the maritime powers, by building submersibles larger and faster than the others, maintaining a show of naval strength.

But as submersibles were not designed to fight each other, this did not matter. The angel of peace

hovered above and the nations ceased to fear each other, attending to internal affairs. The United States had absorbed her trusts and was deporting the negro—a ten years' job, nearly done. England and Germany had suffered peaceful revolution and emerged under popular government. The Sick Man died, the Suicide was dying, and the big, bullying Bear, having passed through the throes of nihilistic stomachache and vomited forth the autocracy, still remembered the quarrel that was done, and sniffed and growled along the northern frontier of China in a way discouraging to Chinese emigration, which, in fact, was a problem now engaging the main attention of Japan, and one which brought her a community of interest—though nothing of sympathy—with the United States.

Under Japan's intelligent rule China's open door swung out as well as in, and the overflowing millions of the prosperous land poured forth to people the earth, but turned back from that growling, grumbling bear, and, ignoring the natural course of empire, and a Chinese exclusion act, surged eastward and flooded the whole Pacific coast of North and South America with Chinese cheap labor, all the more troublesome because skilled. But the United States, meeting unexpected and strenuous objection from the remnant of her black population to being sent to the crowded and undeveloped African coast, gathered up the last free and enlightened brother, his women and his young, and, skilled in deporta-

tion — including in the round-up every Celestial below the rank of diplomat—then sent the consignment westward on the traditional course of empire, or, to be exact, the Great Circle course from San Francisco to Shanghai.

Japan notified the States that if the fleet of transports approached within the three-mile limit of the Chinese coast she would construe it as an act of war. The United States, busy with a coming presidential election, and happily rid of the Dark Danger and the Yellow Peril at one move, delayed response, and Japan recalled her ambassador, with the fleet still in mid-ocean. Uncle Sam mustered his navy, and from all ports of the world the submersibles flocked to join the fleet, while the Russian Bear growled encouragement to Uncle Sam, launched five uncompleted battle-ships, and tactlessly announced that the reign of the submersible was over.

And in the various bone-yards the old leviathans tugged in the tide at anchor and mooring-chains, only the poets finding in this the restlessness of tethered steeds of war.

II

This was the situation when the U. S. S. *Vacquero*, despatched from Honolulu, caught up with the fleet of transports off the Saddle Islands on the Chinese coast, and found herself the first fighting craft to join them. She was a standardized craft, differing in no

essentials from other ships of other navies—about two hundred feet long, spindle-shaped, but with a flat deck for about a third of her length amidships, railed in and containing her conning-tower, periscope tube, search-light, hatches, and exhausts from the gasolene and liquid-air turbines beneath. Funnels she had none, and but one non-corrosive saluting-gun forward; yet with the knowledge in mind of six submerged, pivoted torpedo-tubes hidden in her underbody, she was a peculiarly murderous-looking craft, skimming along at twenty-five knots; and young Ross, the lieutenant in command, was in no way surprised at the enthusiasm he aroused as he charged up the line of twenty huge steamers crowded with black and yellow humanity. Each ship welcomed him with hoarse, inarticulate cheers merging into a continuous roar of approval, that only gave way to the next outburst.

"What's the news," asked each skipper through a megaphone, as Ross raced past, and, "Nothing," he would answer, "except that our orders are not to fight except in self-defence; so, follow the ship ahead until you get signals from me or a ranking boat."

"I wonder," said the ensign who filled the post of executive officer, "if the Japanese would really sink those ships and drown all those people—half of them Chinese."

"With as little compunction," answered Ross; "as you would feel at catching a fish. The negroes are nothing to them, while they are overburdened

with Chinese. And unless help comes, too, and we can outnumber their fleet, we may be the first to go."

Ross went on; the mouth of the Yangtse was still two hundred miles away, and there was scouting to be done. Numerous craft of his own type and flag appeared during the day, all flying numbers inferior to his own, and, as ranking officer, he sent these back to accompany the fleet. During the years of naval degeneracy tactics had been neglected. Rank by number and a wireless signal-code were the only aids to method; but cognizance by eyes and ears had not been abolished, and one craft met, No. 23—Ross's was No. 7—rounded to alongside, and her commander hailed:

"I've been close in. Have you seen 'em? There are twenty and more mustered in the South Channel."

"Are they light or in diving trim?" asked Ross.

"Light—though I'm sure I saw a periscope about fifty miles back. It followed me a while. Something big and fast had submerged. It made fully twenty knots."

"All right. I'm going in. Go back and wait."

A periscope is a rigid, perpendicular tube extending upward from the interior of a submerged craft, with a prismatic lens in the end to catch and reflect downward a picture of what goes on above. An hour later Ross saw the periscope reported to him, also the big and fast "something" beneath it—a round, glistening, steel hull capped by a slant-sided

conning-tower, from the centre of which rose the tube. It seemed like a huge globe, its curvature indicating a diameter of at least eighty feet; but it moved through the water on a course to intercept the *Vacquero* at a speed almost incredible in a ball-shaped hull. There was nothing to betray its nationality, but, as it evidently wished to speak the *Vacquero*, Ross manned his forward tube, filled the ballast-tanks, and when submerged to the diving condition, headed for the stranger, and, still keeping the deck, slowed down and stopped. The stranger stopped with an unusual suddenness, and a head and shoulders rose out of the conning-tower. It was those of a youngish man with an alert, boyish face and fine, white teeth, much in evidence when he smiled.

"Hello, there, lieutenant," he called when the *Vacquero* had crept up to him. "Got any oil—light oil—more than you need this trip?"

"Plenty of medium grade, if that will do," answered Ross, doubtfully. "But who are you, and what have you there—a submarine?"

"Well, it's a periscope, as you can see, and for the rest, it's a centrifugal pump with a high-speed rotary. My oil's too thick and it heats up. That's about all I can tell you now."

"Hardly enough, considering the situation. What's your nationality?"

"I'm an American." He smiled and showed his teeth.

"But your boat?" asked Ross, impatiently.

"Depends upon what she can do to-morrow and which country buys me out."

"Are you an armed craft? Then you are a pirate if you meddle with the affairs of nations."

"I am not armed nor armored; and the affairs I meddle with will go to the bottom. The other side won't care."

"Don't quibble with me. I am a government officer with a tube trained upon you now."

"You couldn't hit me with every torpedo you've got, lieutenant," said the stranger, smiling again. "You'd have to strike a horizontal knife-edge with the firing-pin of your torpedo, and it's one chance in a million. You can't aim in a vertical plane."

Ross puzzled over the statement, and the stranger went on.

"I've neither rudder nor screw to catch a torpedo. I can get thirty-five knots in five seconds. I can stop as quickly. I might—though I'm not sure—run away from a torpedo."

"Nonsense," said Ross. "It's beyond the power of machinery."

For answer the stranger ducked into the conning-tower, closed the divided hatch, then, throwing a spoon-shaped sheet of water high overhead, the curved object darted about a hundred yards to starboard, stopped almost instantly, and darted back to its former position. Ross's eyes opened at the exhibition, and when the stranger again rose out of

the hatch, said: "What in the name of Heaven have you got? How do you get that speed in a ball? I should say it was forty knots an hour."

"No, thirty-five, or a little less. It's twenty under water. I can catch and destroy any submersible afloat or submerged. I suppose you know that Russia has gone back to the battle-ship."

"Yes. Are you connected with that?"

"Partly. She stole some of my features after granting me a patent. The submersible is doomed, and the battle-ship will again become the backbone of a fleet."

"If you are unarmed, how can you destroy anything, even though, as you claim, invulnerable to attack."

"Watch out to-morrow. Keep your colors hoisted, even when submerged. I want to make no mistakes. I have a fluorescent search-light, but it is none of the best."

"You are not a benefactor of humanity," said Ross, with a slight shudder. "You bring back the battle-ship—and war upon the sea."

"But if your oil is any good, and my engine don't heat up, I'll prevent the drowning of several thousand people to-morrow. It all depends upon the oil. Now, let's have it, lieutenant, and I'll credit the government when I sell out."

The round craft moved back alongside, and a rope thrown by her commander was bent to a small keg brought up from the engine-room. "You see, lieu-

tenant," said he, as he hauled the floating keg of oil up the curved incline, "it's a combination engine, cool enough under liquid air, but hot under gasolene."

"I see," answered Ross, with a smile. "But, do you know, you've told me most of your features."

"All but my motive and offensive power. Well, puzzle it out, and you're welcome. And remember —keep your colors up, all of you. Good-bye."

He sank down the hatch with the keg, closed it from below, and the craft slowly settled, disappeared, and buried all but about three feet of the periscope tube. Then, with a swish of water, this tube darted away and was lost to sight in the distance. Ross emptied his tanks, rang the "jingler," and went on.

"Liquid air submerged and gasolene for surface, of course," he mused. "Unarmored, yet invulnerable. Unarmed, yet able to destroy. No screw nor rudder, yet faster than a turbine boat. Fluorescent search-light. Ball-shaped, too. A centrifugal pump. What for?"

He had forgotten one feature named and assumed one not named.

III

From information derived from the craft he met and sent back that day, Ross learned that the six ranking officers of the navy, who might supersede him should they arrive, were too far away to take

part in the events of the morrow, so he formed his plans with regard to his own judgment and orders. About midnight he made the bell-buoy at the outer bar of the Yangtse-Kiang, and stopped his engine. Then at daylight he saw the fleet, a line of large, black craft, extending from the shallows on the southern shore far to the north, where Shawei Shan Light still twinkled in the gray of the morning. Not even a submersible could sneak through that line undiscovered, for so slight a noise as the humming of her engine would be detected by the sensitive telegraph-receivers that every boat carried. Somewhere among that line was the flag-ship, and, hoisting the ensign, Ross signalled in the international code, asking the intentions of the Japanese fleet.

The reply was more to the point than had been the ultimatum of Japan. The first transport to pass the line of ships was to be considered as within the three-mile limit and would be immediately torpedoed and sunk. Ross replied that the transports would make the attempt, and that, while his orders bound him to remain strictly on the defensive, the first submergence of any Japanese craft in this contingency would be considered a hostile act. To this no reply was given, and he turned back to join the transports, fully awake to the responsibilities of his position.

There were no precedents to guide him. Since the destruction of the Japanese battle-ships by the early submarines years before, the torpedo had never been used in war. The tactics of the past were useless in

a battle fought in the dark, illumined only by the short, scant light of individual search-lights. A battle fought wholly on the surface was not to be considered, for a craft of either side, hard-pressed, would submerge for safety. So, with regard to the utter futility of any defensive action not involved in high speed, and the fact that a periscope tube above water could be seen farther than the whole hull beneath, decided Ross to keep his fleet on the surface until driven below.

To this end he reformed the transports into four columns of five ships each, gave the submersibles a numerical place—he had sixteen besides his own boat—and directed them to divide and flank the transports in, but, if hostilities began, to charge around the square at full speed and torpedo every enemy that gave signs of its presence. And so instructed, the six columns of ships crept in, at mid-day being close to the Japanese line—now a row of dots—for they had sunk to the awash, or diving condition, and showed nothing above water but their circular conning-towers.

Down in quiet compartments below the water-line, isolated from one another, and each adjusted in wave length to a fellow on some other ship of the navy, were the transmitters and receivers of the under-water, wireless telegraph system adopted by the government. The sixteen "attuned" to those in the craft under Ross were manned, and the pneumatic tubes that brought the messages to the

conning-tower were tested; but until the boats submerged, signalling was to be by flags. With this prearranged and understood, Ross was a little surprised at the popping into the conning-tower of a cylinder containing a message from No. 5 of his fleet, with which boat he was even then in communication by flags. It was a meaningless jumble of letters only one cluster of which formed a word, and that word was "Fulton."

"Fulton?" said Ross to his aid. "One of the first submarines bore that name. The Russians bought her in 1904."

"I read up on those boats lately," said the ensign. "They could stand on their heads, or tails—almost, couldn't they?"

"Yes, but they were no good. Slow, and with but one tube. See what five has to say."

Asked by flags, No. 5 denied having telegraphed, and, concluding that it was an untranslatable message caught from some synchronous machine in the Japanese fleet, Ross put the matter from his mind.

With the American ensign flying from every mast and jack-staff, the great fleet moved slowly in, and when the *Vacquero*, ahead and in the centre, had passed through the Japanese line, the latter's formation changed. Like the swinging of two huge, hidden gates half the line drew to starboard, half to port, and both closed in, forming a wide lane of dots through which the fleet would have to pass. Then

the four leading transports and the flanking protectors entered the lane, and the two lines of dots sank out of sight. Ross signalled "full speed ahead" and rang his jingler, but what followed was beyond his cognizance and control.

He turned sharply to port and joined the line of submersibles racing around the square, and now and then discharged a torpedo when he sighted a periscope tube, but there was no uplift of water and smoke to indicate the impact on a submerged hull, and soon the periscopes disappeared. The Japanese had taken bearings, and submerged still farther for a rush. From the twenty transports came a hoarse, buzzing sound, the combined effect of many thousand human voices raised in prayers and shrieks of terror. It rose and fell, but increased on the whole and attained a volume that prevented Ross from hearing the usual muffled boom of under-water explosion. But he could see, with harrowing distinctness, the results of that hidden rush. Mound after mound of lifted water arose alongside of the doomed transports, which, bursting like huge bubbles, released clouds of black and yellow smoke. Here and there among them could be seen a cloud of white, attesting to shattered boilers, but the sound of the steam could not be heard above the buzzing.

It was soon over. The outer ships suffered first; but they had hardly begun to heel and settle before the mounds and clouds lifted beside the inner columns of ships. Nothing could be done for them,

and when a message of one word—"torpedoed," came from No. 4 of his fleet, Ross was glad of an excuse to submerge, not only to shut out the agonizing sights and sounds, but to meet the enemy on more even terms and fight.

"Where," asked the ensign, whose eye as he caught it reflected the horror in his own—"where is that invincible ball that was to prevent all this?"

Ross shook his head; but the question called to his mind the admonition of the stranger, and with the signal to submerge he ordered all ensigns to be left flying at the staffs. Then he rang bells and pushed buttons, the engine-room responded, and in fifteen seconds they were in the dim gray of the under sea with only the telegraph to connect them with the fleet, and only the picture on the periscope table to remind them, to the last detail, of reeling mast and crowded boat, of the final and utter annihilation of the transports.

IV

In that day's battle beneath the sea it was proved that men *will* fight in the dark, provided they are willing to die, and that the submarine *can* fight its fellow, provided that fellow gets within range of its search-light. For all that it was a huge game of blindman's-buff; and Ross, in a directive capacity, could know of the progress of the game only by the faint, booming sounds with occasional sharp con-

cussions, that came to him through the sea, and by the short, incoherent, and abbreviated messages that came popping into the conning-tower from below. "Torpedoed," said one, and there was no more from this source. "Tor—" said another, the hiatus in the message explaining itself. One signalled that she was engaging five, but said no more about it. Another reversed the tenor of news and announced three of the enemy sunk, and hope for herself, but was not heard from again. After the initial signal to "find and fight," Ross sent no distracting directions; he had his hands full with the care of his own boat, with watching the search-light, reading the messages, and checking off the losses.

It was an under-water mêlée; there was no possibility of cognizance, evasion, or intelligent direction. Two craft could detect each other's presence by their telegraph-receivers, could approach and flash their search-lights at close torpedo range. If friends, they could pass on and look for others; if enemies, slip their torpedoes and also pass on — or down. In quick succession Ross passed two, more by chance than through any advantage of seamanship or skill, meeting them head on at full speed, and launching at each a broadside torpedo, while dodging the return fire by quick use of the horizontal rudder. All four torpedoes missed, and with eyes flashing with excitement in the new game of life and death, Ross ground the wheel to port, to take another chance at two to one; but he saw dimly in the lessening glow

of his search-light that only one was returning—the other passing on—and he chose a course back that would leave it to starboard, open to his unexpended broadside. Back he went at full speed, and at equal speed came the enemy, a black and growing blur behind a long shaft of light. It was soon over; as the ill-defined blur took form and outline, he let fly the starboard torpedoes, one after another, then ground down the diving-wheel to avoid similar messengers of death. But whether any were sent he never knew. Hardly had the two rushing craft come abreast than there was an explosion—yet with none of the spectacular effects of an explosion in air—no flare of red and hurtling of fragments and sailing away of thinning smoke—only a dull, booming report, a physical impact, and a blotting out of the black boat by a milky cloud. Thrown off his feet by the concussion, and anxious for the safety of his own craft, Ross had just time to throw his search-light downward, and catch a fleeting glimpse of the shattered fragment of hull wobbling towards the bottom before it was hidden from view by the angle of the hull. Then came a telephone call from the engine-room saying that the horizontal steering-gear and the stern torpedo-tube air-valve were damaged.

With all broadside tubes empty, and the stern tube and steering-gear out of order, Ross decided to avoid chances for a time, and with men at work reloading, repairing, and coupling up the hand-gear, he went on in the darkness with search-light shut off

and the boat slowly lifting to the surface from the reserve buoyancy, unchecked by the diving-gear. And now there was time to read the messages piled up under the end of the pneumatic tube from the telegraph-rooms.

He had counted twenty-six of the enemy when the long line of dots had changed to a lane before submerging at the beginning. He had entered this fight with sixteen craft besides his own. Of these, nine had been destroyed, and had sent their last messages while on the way to the bottom. How many had gone down unable to signal he could not guess. But of the twenty-six Japanese boats eleven had been reported sunk, and there was the same doubt of the unreported.

"Not bad," he muttered. "Only fifteen left. Perhaps we can pull through. It 'll be a great thing for me if we do."

Then came a second thought, and a revulsion of feeling. Further fighting would involve the loss of more boats—the death of more men. He had done enough for prestige. So he signalled to his fleet to muster on the surface ten miles due east, and swung his boat to the course.

But a faint, white light that was not from above shone in through the after-dead-lights of the conning-tower, and he knew that a search-light had caught him. He turned sharply to port; the dim effulgence followed. Back to starboard; it increased as a second search-light settled on his craft. He could

not see the whole path of light nor the craft that sent it; and he judged it best not to flash his own. He might outrun the two, but others, attracted by his light, might catch him. So, after a few more futile turns, he settled down to a steady run.

But little by little the light grew stronger, and soon he saw the bows of the two pursuing craft, huge blots in the thick gray of the sea, each flashing its long pencil of light. One quivered as he watched it, and he knew the cause; a slim, black, fishlike thing crept into it from the tube in the stem of the boat—a torpedo, making thirty miles an hour and catching up at the rate of fifteen. A slight sheer to port took the *Vacquero* out of its path, and it passed on ahead.

And now out of the gray sea to starboard came something else, big, black, and indefinable at first, then taking form—a curious form for a craft of any kind, surface or submarine. It resembled two salad-bowls with edges together, convex above and below, concave near the edges which extended sharply and horizontally for about twenty feet from the termination of the convex curve. It was circular in a lateral plane, without rudder, propeller, or any visible means of propulsion; and it darted up close to the *Vacquero*, and stopped with a suddenness which, with its spherical upper body, identified it as the strange craft interviewed the day before.

As Ross viewed it through the dead-lights, the search-lights of the pursuers flooded it; then both

quivered as two more slim spindles darted out of the tubes and into the glow of light. They came on quickly, one behind the other, straight for the big, steel bowl that, at equal speed, was now accompanying the *Vacquero* as if inspecting her. The first torpedo struck just above the circular knife-edge that girdled the craft, but the blunt bulge of the nose slid upward on the long concave, and the torpedo passed on overhead. The other repeated the performance, but struck below the edge, going downward and on. Then the bowl became a shadow, its outlines lost in the rapidity of its rush backward out of the path of light. With nothing to lose now, Ross turned on his own search-light and caught the stranger just in time to see it gently and glancingly touch on the port bilge of the nearest pursuer. Then, whirling like a great top, it darted away, returned across the stern of its victim, and gently brushed up against the second. Both craft, wounded by that sharp, circular knife-edge, dived slowly downward, their paths illumined for a time by their own search-lights.

"It's him," said Ross, as he motioned his aid to shift the wheel. "And we'll go back with him. We've done enough running away."

"But what's his motive power," asked the ensign, whirling the wheel. "It's unearthly — just as he said, no screw nor rudder."

"Don't know," answered Ross, squinting through the sights of the azimuth at the dim shadow receding

in the gloom. "But his motion seems all lateral—that is, in any horizontal direction at torpedo depth."

V

With search-light sweeping from starboard to port, they charged back on the bearing taken by Ross, and on a long, rising incline that soon brought the light of day into the conning-tower, by which time the tubes were loaded and the hand diving-gear in readiness. They might have steered down again, but the light suggested to Ross what, in the excitement, had not occurred to him since the first submergence —to inspect the periscope, the optical instrument that reproduces on a table a moving picture of sea and sky above. And there on the surface ahead of the *Vacquero* was a column of black craft steering east that Ross had no difficulty in recognizing as the Japanese fleet. There were twelve of them, and the height of their bow waves indicated full surface speed. The ensign joined Ross at the table, and their eyes met.

"Three of them on the list of the unrecorded," said Ross; "but the one that gets our signals is still at work. They're going out to intercept us. Cut out that instrument and signal all the rest to disregard rendezvous."

"It's No. 2," answered the young officer, with a final glance at the moving picture on the table.

"Look—look!" he exclaimed. "The two ahead, they're submerging—they're diving. How's that?"

"They're sinking," said Ross, after a moment's inspection. "They submerge on an even keel, as we do. That round fellow is meeting them. Send the signal just the same. We'll get to the top."

The periscope had shown the two leading craft lifting their sterns and dipping their bows. When the water had dripped from the conning-tower dead-lights, and they looked directly at the sight, these two had nearly disappeared, while the third was beginning to dip, and astern of her, rushing back to meet the fourth, was that huge, glistening convex surmounted by the periscope tube. The two men threw open the dead-lights for a clearer view, while their boat in the "awash" condition, like the other, headed towards the rear end of the line and hurried, with all the power of her engines, to be "in at the death."

There was not time. Perhaps in the whole history of naval war a fleet was never sunk so quickly. The speed of the Japanese submersibles was at least twenty-five knots an hour, that of the destroyer thirty-five—a total rate of approach of sixty. The column was less than a mile long. In less than a minute, and before the leading craft had entirely disappeared, all but the last had felt the touch of the sharp, circular knife, and was dipping, rolling, or staggering, according to the nature and location of the wound. The last Japanese boat had turned

aside and was heading back to the west, with about a half-mile lead of its enemy. The slanting spoon of water surmounting the latter rose higher as it started in pursuit, and Ross ordered all tanks emptied, and followed.

"Call our side to the surface," he said, "and bring them along."

A cylinder popped up from below as he spoke, and Ross examined the message it contained. It was the same meaningless jumble, with the English word "Fulton" that had come to them before.

"That's the boat," he said, nodding ahead, "that carries the synchronous machine. Well, she's done for."

But it was not as he expected. The signal to rise was sent to his fleet, and soon dots appeared on the surface, some to starboard, but most of them to the west, and ahead of the fleeing Japanese. A few signals to these started them towards her, and before Ross's tanks were quite emptied he had the satisfaction of seeing her colors flutter down from the jack-staff. She had surrendered.

But something seemed to have happened to the invincible craft that pursued her. The spoon of water had subsided, and as Ross looked at her he noticed that she had stopped and was settling. Then he saw a black spindle rise beside her, curve gracefully in the air, and dive into the sea.

"Down we go," he said, giving the order to refill

the tanks. "She's being torpedoed. Something else is down there."

The round craft soon disappeared, periscope and all, and not knowing her fate, and not caring to approach too close to danger in his "half-and-half" condition, Ross stopped his engine until his boat was under control of the diving-rudder, and watched the spot for some sign of the mystery beneath. Soon he was rewarded. Not a hundred yards away on the starboard bow a black, curving hull with a short superstructure-deck and dome-shaped conning-tower, rose from the depths to show for a few seconds, then, porpoise-like, dived out of sight. But in those few seconds there could be seen a name in white letters on the slanting side of the superstructure.

Then, out of the eddies left by the diving-craft, arose a fan-shaped stream of water, and following it what seemed to be the broad nose of a huge, shovel-nosed shark, until, with the shutting off of the fan-shaped jet and the rising into sight of a familiar conning-tower, it resolved into the circular, knife-edge hull of their preserver. As the leading edge dipped beneath the surface the opposite edge arose, and now from this edge came the fan of water, a powerful stream that slanted upward for fifty feet before it shattered into a deluge of falling drops. Then the hull disappeared, and the fan became an uplifting mound that in a moment gave way to the eddies.

"Down we go," said Ross, excitedly, as the engine-room called that tanks were full. He ground down the diving-wheel and whirled the steering-wheel to port. "That's his motive power—a horizontal jet from the circular edge and a centrifugal pump. Remember—he spoke of it?"

"Yes," said the ensign, "and that fellow he's chasing—that's the—"

"The *Fulton*—I saw her name plainly—the old, obsolete, little *Fulton*, with her one tube and seven knots."

"But she's a diver—she can stand on her head and tail. She's dangerous to that fellow."

"And that's what the message meant. The Japs captured her years ago and have resurrected her. They must have known of this new craft."

At full speed the *Vacquero* quickly went under, and after a few circles Ross picked up the combatants with the search-light—the big, round destroyer poised about thirty feet down, canted at an angle of forty-five degrees, but motionless except for a slow, upward drift; and far down, and in a direction indicated by that canted edge, the *Fulton*, a short, stumpy shape in the dim glow of Ross's light, turning in a wide circle to head back and upward at the quiescent enemy, at which her own small pencil of search-light was directed.

"Something's wrong with him," said the ensign, as the *Fulton* bravely charged upward. Ross looked at the round craft; the knifelike girdle had assumed

a horizontal position, while the hull as a whole went steadily upward.

"He's helpless," he exclaimed. "We must stop the *Fulton*—both starboard torpedoes." He threw the diving-wheel hard down and rang full speed to the engine-room.

Torpedoes are gauged to find and maintain a fixed depth—usually twenty feet, no matter what their submergence when fired. The latter-day submersibles were not designed to withstand more than two atmospheres of pressure. The early submarines could bear ten. It was a dangerous experiment that Ross essayed—to dive into the depths and torpedo a craft able to dive deeper—to hit her with a self-propelling missile whose immediate tendency was to deflect itself upward. But he felt that something was required of him, if not due him, to offset the work of that wonderful boat and her commander, and, with the plates of his craft creaking like barrel staves, he steered down on a path almost parallel to that upward pencil of light. The *Fulton* came on, her bow port lifted to the semblance of an angry upper lip, her futile little search-light still held on her enemy; but at the psychological moment, when she was slightly ahead, slightly above, and a hundred feet away, Ross pushed a button. There was a cough and a thud, and a torpedo went its way. He pressed again, and a second convulsion marked the going out of another. Then he ground the diving-wheel hard up, and the straining, groaning *Vacquero*

answered it, shooting up to safety on an incline steeper than that of her descent. But her searchlight now played on the inert craft above.

For, just before he had fired, a short torpedo had shot out from under the angry upper lip and was travelling upward on a long line-of-beauty. Ross shortened the focus and included it in his light, watching it with what attention he could spare from his own boat. He saw it curve upward, almost beneath the round hull, then assume a straight line directly towards its centre, then reverse its curving path, and he knew that the danger was past—that the line-of-beauty would become a horizontal straight line beneath and away from its target. Then there was a convulsion of the sea, a dull report from beneath, a physical shock, then a second convulsion, report, and shock, and the *Vacquero*, rocking like a row-boat in a tideway, lifted a quarter of her length out of the water, and sank to an equilibrium. And Ross, trembling from reaction, knew that far down in the depths the little, obsolete *Fulton*, struck by two torpedoes, was rolling to the bottom.

He emptied his tanks, and, when his deck was clear of water, headed back for the strange craft, now on the surface, with her young commander's face again rising out of the conning-tower hatch. But it did not look so young as before, though the fine teeth were more in evidence than ever. The lips grinned, rather than smiled, and the eyes were a little sunken.

Ross, somewhat haggard himself, stepped out and hailed him.

"We are deeply indebted to you, sir," he said.

"Hello, lieutenant. Same here. That little devil might have done for me. How d' you feel, now that it's over."

"Shaky."

"Same here. What made you run?"

"Damaged diving - gear. What's wrong with you?"

"Same thing that kept me back at the first of it. Say, lieutenant."

"Well."

"Your damned old oil's no good."

The Dancer

SOMEWHERE in the world was a niche for him, where his love of the beautiful — his sensitive appreciation of the artistic, of the harmony of color, sound, and motion—could be turned into a handsome income; but at the age of twenty John Hardy had not found it. A soul-fettering indolence, shaken off while going through college, had returned to him at matriculation, because at this time the only influence which had ever dominated it—fear of an iron-willed father — was removed. The father, a banker in a small, up-state village, had died penniless, and, as he had no other relatives, young Hardy had come to San Francisco to face the world alone.

Beyond love of a good cigar he had no embarrassing vices, and but few notions of class distinction; yet he could not get employment with the effort he thought sufficient, and at this stage of his quest was reminded of an estimate placed upon him by a young sailor of the navy whom he had met two years before in his native town. McClure was a powerfully built, shrewd-faced boy of his own age, who had

attracted his attention by the ease with which he thrashed three village loafers for making unkind strictures on his uniform, and, later, had won his regard by his practical, worldly wise philosophy and correctness of diction. Though McClure told him nothing of himself except that he was visiting relatives on two weeks' liberty, he yet seemed strongly interested in Hardy, his college education, and his chances in life—which latter, he averred, were not very good.

"When you get your diploma," he said, "you'll find it the least of your assets. What you'll need most is a term in the service. Why, it 'll make a man out of a weakling."

The ambiguous speech was lost upon Hardy at the time, but he divined its meaning now. He had done nothing to prove that he was not a weakling, and if he was one, McClure had known it from the first. If this was so he needed a post-graduate course in character, and if the navy was the only school, the sooner he began the better. He would get employment as well as tutelage.

It was the arrival of McClure's ship in port that had brought the matter to his mind. He had read in the papers that, short of coal after her long run across the Pacific, she had anchored off the city to partly replenish her bunkers before steaming up to Mare Island. And, on the mere chance that his friend was still on board of her, he went out in a shore boat, climbed the gangway, and asked for him.

A leather-lunged boatswain's mate bawled the name, and after an interval McClure appeared, rubbing his eyes. Hardy was further demoralized by the welcome he received. McClure, dressed in neat blue and visiting relatives, was a genial enough friend and adviser, but, roused from a nap on the dusty deck after a hard spell at coaling ship, he was an unkempt and unkind critic of all the world, begrimed and bad-tempered—hardly recognizable in his soiled working ducks. He listened with weary air to Hardy's story of trouble.

"And what do you want," he asked, sourly—"to ship in the navy? Why, you'll die."

"But," faltered Hardy, "can't I develop? Don't I need something like this?"

"No, you need a mother. You go back to that town and grow up with it, and when you can whale every loafer and rowdy in it—every fireman and constable—you'll have a chance for your life in the navy."

"Why—how—"

"Why — how," repeated McClure, scornfully. "Johnny, you're a college graduate, but a milksop, nevertheless. I don't mean that you can't develop, but the navy is too hard. You can't ship here; you'd have to go up to the receiving-ship. And if you did you'd find five hundred helyons with nothing to do but to devil you. You'd be a drivelling idiot in a month."

"But didn't it develop you?"

McClure hesitated a moment, then said: "The navy refined me. There wasn't a tougher kid in the training-ship than I was when I shipped. I could handle my fists, and knew the record of every slugger in the land. I ran away from a step-mother —but she was not so bad; it was myself. We made friends lately. She was on from the East, visiting your town when I was there."

Hardy remembered seeing this visitor—a stern-faced, elderly woman, with the figure and gait of a strong, young girl — in McClure's company, and mentioned it.

"That was her," said the sailor; "and what do you think she said when you passed us one time? She said, 'What a nice boy!'"

"Well, what of it?" answered Hardy, irritably.

"Nothing, for that's just what you are—a nice boy. You belong home for ten years yet. Say—hold on. Take something with you, for my step-mother."

Hardy, who had turned away, halted, and McClure rushed into the superstructure, returning with a sealed packet. "It's her picture, not mine," he said, as he handed it to Hardy; "and she wants it, but I don't like to mail it, and won't get liberty for a week. So you take it up to her. You know her name—Mrs. Berry McClure—and where we stop in that town. If she is back East the folks can mail it. Tell 'em I'll be up soon. Now, over the side with you. You've stayed too long, and this is our busy day. Here comes the first luff. Over with you."

With not a word of good-bye he urged Hardy to the gangway and went back to his nap, or his work. Hurt by his high-handed disposal of the case, Hardy descended to the waiting boat and was pulled shoreward by the boatman he had employed—an individual with a keen eye for the beautiful in war-ship construction—who gazed raptly as he rowed at the craft they were leaving. Hardy, having pocketed the picture, sat with head bowed, thinking about his friend's change of front; then, feeling qualmish from the motion of the boat, lowered his face in his hands, with his elbows on his knees. The boatman, loath to lose the charming picture which so appealed to him, stopped rowing while details of the cruiser were yet visible, and commented on them. But Hardy answered not; he was too miserable, of mind and body—seeing which, the boatman, having rested, bent to his oars with doubled energy, and the boat shot ahead. Then there came a startled yell from starboard: "Where the h—l you goin'? Back water. Oh, you poor, unfortunate fools! Look at you now."

A shadow darkened the air; there was a rush of water and a humming of wind; then, almost before they had looked to see, the chain bobstay of a small schooner struck the boat, partly overturned and swamped it, pushed it aside with her bow wave, and went on, leaving the boatman waist-deep on the thwart, with one oar still in his hand, and carrying Hardy perched on two horizontal wire-ropes which

he afterwards learned were the jib guys. With no time to think, he had obeyed a primordial instinct and leaped upward.

The man who had shouted assisted him on board, then, berating him the while, led him aft to where another man at the tiller was exchanging parting, and very profane, compliments with the disappearing boatman. He was grizzled and brown, with an honest, humorous face, and he laughed at the frightened Hardy.

"And I s'pose," he said, bluntly, "that you want me to put back and land you at the dock. Well, I'll be d — d if I do; nor will I waste time puttin' you aboard any other craft. I'm in a hurry this trip, and a man short. You'll do. And as for your chum back yonder—he's got one oar and can get ashore. T'h—l with him."

It was a long trip that Hardy made in that little schooner—far to the south and close to the coast, where the alternate warmth and chill of the land and sea breeze, and an occasional squall, made necessary much doffing and donning of his one coat. He was not ill-treated, but it was expected of him that he work; and in the utter strangeness of his new sensations he forgot the photograph given him by McClure until, one day, it fell out of the inside-pocket where he had placed it, with its string and wrapping worn away from the damp friction of the cloth. He looked at the picture. It was stained and faded, with softened edges, but the face was distinct. It

was that of a young girl between childhood and womanhood—a face of rare beauty, with delicately moulded features, and large eyes upturned in the posing, framed and crowned by a wealth of wavy hair. At first glance he detected in certain features a faint resemblance to those of Mrs. McClure as he remembered her; but this impression faded before the fascinating beauty of the face as a whole. And the fascination grew upon him as he looked, until it seemed to him a revelation of divinity.

His was the artistic temperament, and he was yet in the formative stage. He was far from his past environment and the conventions which had governed his life. The beautiful face in the picture spoke to his soul; and it was, perhaps, the one influence in the world to inspire in him the highest ideals and arouse him to the highest effort.

There was nothing on the faded card-board to indicate its age or identity. The photographer's name on the lower edge was worn away.

"What a beauty she was when young!" he sighed. "She must have been young—very young when it was taken, long before I was born."

He put the picture away, with emotion new and strange to him; but at every opportune moment he would bring it forth and study it. And while he retained the memory of the pure, beautiful face—through all the years of stress and strain and struggle that followed — it kept him clean-minded and high-minded. It made him a man.

But a one-idea man as nature had intended. He never saw two things at once.

II

On the little schooner's return to San Francisco, her good - natured old skipper paid Hardy some money for his time and services, declaring at the same time, however, that he was of no more use than a spare pump, and threatening all manner of physical and legal reprisal should Hardy dare to bring the matter of his enforced cruise into court. But the young fellow was but too glad to get ashore, and, once there, hastened dutifully to his boyhood home to fulfil his trust. But neither Mrs. McClure nor the family whom she had visited were now in the town, and, not regretting an extension of his lien on the picture, he returned to the big city and hung the picture on the wall of his room. Then, steadied and strengthened by his two months of out-door life and labor, and fortified by his new inspiration, he resumed the quest for work with better courage.

But as the fruitless weeks rolled on this courage nearly died; and, stubbornly resolved to bind himself to no employment that would lessen the influence of the picture, he might have failed of even a foothold had it not been for his possession of an attribute which, though not mentioned by maxim writers as an aid to success, is yet earnestly desired by many

who do succeed, and, properly applied, is a source of profit. In Hardy's case it not only gave him a living, but led him into a profession for which he was, by nature and training, eminently fitted.

He had been a college athlete; he was tall and straight, with an unusual chest development, and around the framework of his body the muscles and sinews had arranged themselves into a series of knobs, ridges, and criss-cross lines that made him a delightful spectacle to an anatomist. With his regular features, arching eyebrows, and rather sorrowful dark eyes, he was that very rare man that looks well in a bathing-suit; and one day, while bathing at Alameda Beach, before his money was quite too far gone for such luxuries, he was annoyed by the persistent staring and hovering about of a fellow-bather, who, with serious, bearded, intellectual face, might have seemed above such offensiveness. He left the water when Hardy did, and later, both clothed, they met on the beach.

"You will pardon me, sir," said the stranger, "but I noticed your physique when we were in the water."

"I was aware of it," answered Hardy, shortly.

"I meant no offence, I assure you; but—I am a sculptor, with an eye for lines and curves. I never saw such superb development. How did you get it, may I ask?"

"Football, baseball, and — not work — looking for it," said Hardy, bitterly. "Tramping the street and climbing stairs."

"Are you looking for work?" asked the other, eagerly. "I can give you posing, and can get you more. I am doing a gladiator in stone, and can use you for a month at least."

"I'm your man," said Hardy, promptly.

He posed for the artist, who, in his excess of admiration, could not conceal the secret of his find. Other men came to his studio to inspect the marvel, and Hardy became a professional model—soon the busiest and highest-priced in the city. And before the careless life of the studios had lessened his single-mindedness, he had astonished an employer by the facility with which he dashed off a charcoal sketch while resting between poses. It was a bit of old ocean—the peculiar uplift of a cross-sea with the wind going down—that had pictured itself on his mind through many repetitions of the view on the trip to the southward.

"Where did you get the idea?" asked the artist.

"Been there. Went down the coast lately."

"And had you studied art?"

"Drawing at school. I was good at it."

"Did you follow it up? Have you tried to develop it?"

"No, only to amuse myself—like this."

"Then you are a wonder. Try something else. Draw an old sailor, a ship, anything nautical. Try a pretty woman. Let me know your limitations."

Hardy had learned a little of nautical technique on his trip. He knew a bark from a ship or schooner

—a sloop from a cat-boat. He returned to the artist with several sketches of different sailing-craft, three or four of his picturesque captors, and one, a labor of love, of a beautiful face crowned by wavy hair—a crude copy of his picture. The artist inspected them critically.

"Faulty, all of them," he said; "but, of course, that's to be expected. The wonder is that you have the spirit of it, which is sufficient. But where'd you get this face? A relative or friend?"

"No," said Hardy, nervously, "a copy."

The artist studied the drawing a moment, then said, "Let's see."

He overturned a pile of portfolios in a corner, delved among their contents, and brought forth a large photograph—a life-size bromide enlargement. "That the same?" he asked, showing it to Hardy.

He stared, open-eyed and open-mouthed. It was the face of his divinity, older, more womanly, but with the same upturned eyes, the same wonderful wealth of hair.

"Do you know her?" he stammered. "It's the same face, but older. Did you ever see her?"

"No," said the artist. "This is merely an advertisement of the particular kind of paper used in the reproduction"— he pointed to some white lettering in a corner—"but it's an ideal face, and would make the reputation of any artist who could create it with pencil or crayon. I forget where I picked it up."

"But the original—is she alive? Or, rather—I

mean—is she young. I thought she was an old woman."

"No," said the artist, glancing at his face. "I think I remember—in fact, I know—that I've seen other poses of this same face in New York last year. Some famous beauty back East, no doubt, but far from being an old woman."

"You think she's young yet?"

"Of course. This picture can't be over two or three years old. They don't use back numbers in these ads. Beauty is too common."

Hardy was silent while he stared at the face.

"A beautiful face," went on the artist, "but beauty is common. Your forte is virility and action. Hardy, there are few artists in town with the technique of the sea, and there is a demand. Drive in. Go ahead on pen and ink. Catch on to the commercial end of it, and get the rest afterwards. Draw ships and sailors and storms."

Hardy went home, and, locked in his room, spent the following night in searching self-analysis. Towards morning his relation to this picture reduced itself to a problem demanding solution. An ideal face from a dead and vanished past was one thing; the living, breathing original was another. The one was a dream, a promise—an expression of the unuttered things that dumb men yearn and hope for; the other the fulfilment—a woman to seek and know and love. McClure or his step-mother could solve the problem.

But McClure and his step-mother were out of his

reach; and when reached, and the problem solved, what then? What particular rights had he in the solution of the problem—he, a nice boy, a milksop, and a failure? He supplied himself with materials, engaged a small studio, and went to work.

He did not relinquish the posing that gave him a livelihood; but he so compacted his appointments as to secure three hours a day for himself. On the wall facing his chair he placed the picture, the only ornament of the room, and, helped by its influence and the criticism of his artist friends, he slowly mastered the essentials of his new venture. But it was a year before he produced a piece of work just good enough for publication in a weekly and six months later when the next appeared. Then he received letters, and became the object of inquiry, to the result that he gave up posing to attend to orders.

Three hours a day at creative work is tax enough upon the average brain. Hardy now devoted six, seven, and eight, and discouraged all distracting visits of friends. Alone with his soul and his soul's delight, he walked the floor, worked and smoked, until tired; then smoked and looked—at the picture on the wall—until rested, when he would pick up his brushes and resume. In these moments of resting and walking his mind went East, roaming and searching the cities of the Atlantic seaboard. One of them might hold her—the woman he worked for. Which one, he would know, when there was money enough.

At the end of the second year of work, with his sensitive mouth twitching from nervous strain, a fixed pucker growing between his eyebrows, and his luminous, dark eyes alight with an ever-ready, startled expression, he presented a spectacle that spurred certain editors, anxious about their circulation—and, incidentally, his health—to action. One day a strong, masterful man forced his way into the little studio and found him walking around in a circle. He was a physician, he said—a friend of a friend—and was interested enough in Hardy's work to call on him. But he talked no more of his work than was necessary.

"Why are you walking the floor?" he asked, at length.

"Just a habit," stammered Hardy. "I acquired it at sea. I think best on my feet."

"Drinking man?"

"No, total abstainer."

"Coffee, tea, tobacco? Do you overindulge?"

"Don't think so."

"Love affair?" The doctor glanced at the picture on the wall.

"No," said Hardy, following his glance. "That's merely an ideal head."

The doctor smiled. "I'll give you two months more of this," he said, "to wind up in a padded cell. You don't want medicine, nor a vacation in the ordinary sense. You want variety, and less smoke. Burn up these brushes and pencils. Turn that pict-

ure to the wall, or hide it. Walk the streets, go to the theatre, eat, drink, talk, and walk for a while. Spend money like a foolish fellow-man, and get something else to think about. Get that girl out of your head."

"Do you know her?" asked Hardy, eagerly, pointing at the picture.

"Of course I do," answered the doctor, in a tone that betrayed his real ignorance of the lady. "She's the only girl on earth; but—get rid of her, or she'll kill you."

Hardy obeyed all his instructions but the last; for, before finally locking his studio door, he lovingly tinted the eyes, cheeks, and hair of his divinity in the colors that he, somehow, felt that they ought to wear, filled in the stained and faded background, trimmed the edges, and gave the picture to a frame-maker for a setting he thought worthy of it; then, while waiting for its completion, when he would take it with him to the far-away metropolis, he gave himself up to the first relaxation he had known since his battle began. This included nightly visits to the playhouses; and one evening, when he had received the framed picture in person, too late to take home, he brought it with him to a restaurant dinner, and then to a theatrical performance different from what he had seen before.

All seats being sold, he lounged, standing, over the backs of the rear chairs. The performance had begun; a dance by the whole company was in prog-

ress, and to render more shadowy and illusive the shifting flecks of color in the dancers' costumes, the light was toned down to a dim red glow from a hidden source. The music was of the quick, blood-stirring kind—the dancing by experts of the profession. Their costumes were modest, their movements graceful and restrained. There was nothing in the brilliant spectacle of color and light to arouse more than mild interest in the ordinary on-looker; but John Hardy was not ordinary. Nor was he experienced in sensations. His mental fatigue and the uplifting influence of the picture, framed and enfolded in his hand, were forgotten in the presence of the picture on the stage. Yet it was not the spectacle as a whole that most strongly appealed to him.

"Just look at that little thing to the right," he had heard a lady in front of him say to her escort. "Just look at her—the little thing to the right." And it was on this dancer that his eyes were fixed.

She was one of two that were placed in front, flanking the star of the chorus. They were all costumed alike, and the movements of their hands and feet in time and direction were similar; but here comparison ended. The "little thing to the right" danced as though her soul was alive with the joy of it, bowing, bending, waving her arms in all the graceful and charming abandon of a happy child. Having seen, Hardy watched like one entranced, until, glutted with sensuous intoxication, he sought

the competition of variety, and looked for it in the others—in vain, for his eye returned to the girl on the right and remained until the end. Then he enthusiastically applauded.

"Isn't it glorious," he gasped to a man standing next to him—man whom he felt, rather than saw, had been watching him. "The one to the right."

"Ya-a-as," drawled the other; "and how's the battle of life?"

Hardy looked squarely at his half-averted face, remarking first the immaculate evening dress of the man, next an unfamiliar mustache, then the well-remembered profile and shrewd smile.

"McClure!" he exclaimed. "Is this you?"

"Shouldn't wonder," he answered, slowly, as he turned and took Hardy's extended hand. "And how is the battle? Are you the town terror yet, or did they bring you up in your mad career?"

"Are you still thinking of that?" asked Hardy, the friendly smile on his face dying away.

"Why, of course," drawled McClure, "and I've been thinking of you ever since the show opened. Curious, isn't it?"

"Not so very," said Hardy, dryly, "insomuch as I've been thinking of you pretty steadily for two years. I admit your manner at our last meeting had a powerful effect upon me, but—isn't it about time you dropped it?"

"Why, how is that?" returned McClure, with the same aggravating drawl and patronizing smile.

"My manner affected you? That is really wonderful. Tell me."

"Not here," said Hardy, struggling between resentment and a natural desire to confide in McClure and learn about the picture's original. "I want you to tell me about this"—he held up the package in his hand—"it's a serious matter with me."

"What is it? A serious matter? Follow me," said McClure, tragically. He led the way to the entrance, and Hardy, with a glance at the stage and a mental resolve to see the performance again, followed him to the street and into a near-by café, where he seated himself abreast of McClure at a table. Not since his last meeting with him had he been subjected to such domineering insolence from a human being; but, realizing that it came from McClure's early estimate of him, his only thought was to overcome it tranquilly and logically —a difficult feat in his present overwrought and nervous condition. Declining the drink which McClure suggested, but accepting a cigar, he launched forth, gaining in earnestness as his narrative progressed, and described his mishap in the boat, his inability to deliver the picture to Mrs. McClure, and the powerful stimulus it had been to his courage and ambition. McClure listened intently, his face sobering as Hardy enthused over the beauty of the face, and resuming its exasperating smile as he spoke of its influence for good.

"And I tell you, McClure," said Hardy, vehement-

ly, in conclusion, "you were wrong—or, rather, incomplete—in your judgment. With this face to inspire me I have won an established place as an illustrator, with a career in art ahead of me"—he began untying the package—"and I could as easily have fought my way in the navy, milksop as I was." He handed the picture, framed in gold, to McClure. "Now, McClure," he said, "you told me it was your step-mother's picture; and I believed that it was—a picture taken before I was born. But an artist friend of mine says that he has seen this face in several different poses, and he believes that the original is young. Tell me about this."

McClure studied the picture a moment, then looked up and said, "Practically, Hardy, you're in love with this face."

"Love is not the name for it," answered Hardy, impatiently. "If I met the living original, and she proved good as she looks, I could love her. That is all. That face is my ideal of beauty."

McClure's brow hardened, and he turned the picture face down on the table. "I was right in my judgment," he said. "You are visionary—too much so. The navy would have killed you, as I said."

"It would?" said Hardy, hotly. "Do you think me incapable of change and growth. You have changed and grown. You were not dressed like this when I saw you last."

"The navy is full of such as me," answered McClure, calmly. "I left a good home to enlist, and

when I was discharged, shortly after I saw you last, I merely went back to it and the business I was cut out for. My folks were all in the theatrical line, and I'm now connected with the show we were looking at to-night—assistant manager."

"You are," said Hardy, his worn-out brain unconsciously seeking relief from the tension. "Then tell me—about that girl to the right. I never saw anything like it—such dancing. Who is she? Is she young, and pretty as she looks in that red light?"

McClure leaned back in his chair and stared hard at him. "You are certainly an erratic lunatic, Hardy," he said, "or else ten times more a duffer and a milksop than you were."

"I think I'm neither," rejoined Hardy, stiffly. "Are you trying to quarrel with me?"

"Not at all," said McClure, turning up the picture again. "But if you're a man to derive inspiration, enthusiasm, ambition, and all such worthy emotions from a mere picture, you cannot, logically, go dotty over a bit of dancing as you did to-night. Why, you were a spectacle in yourself. Your excitement attracted my attention before I recognized you."

"I care nothing for that," said Hardy, his face flushing. "But what is there strange or incongruous about it? She's a marvel of grace, but I couldn't see her features, and only asked if she were pretty."

McClure puffed his cigar for a while, then said: "Because she is the best dancer in the company, we

darken the stage so that her face will not spoil the effect. Understand?"

"Yes." Hardy was slightly disappointed.

"And her name is Berry McClure."

"Your step-mother?"

McClure drew an evening's programme from his pocket and showed the printed name. Then he twirled the picture around on the table.

"And when she was young, and pretty, she looked like this. You've got the color of eyes and hair to a shade—yellow and blue."

"Then—" said Hardy, with a sinking heart. "She is—my friend was wrong."

"Berry McClure is an old woman," said McClure. "The profession is full of old folks. But Berry McClure's photographs are still on sale under the copyright. As this one represents a money value, you'll have no objections, I hope, to my delivering it to her as I first intended?"

"No-o-o," stammered Hardy, with his head resting on his hand. "It's hers — it's not my property. But say — it means so much to me. Could you not induce her—"

"No, I could not—or, rather, do not care to. She always blamed me for losing it, the only one of this pose in existence. But she'll pay you for your work upon it and for the frame. How much?"

"Nothing," said Hardy, miserably and savagely. "Where am I to get a duplicate? I don't think you understand the value of that particular picture

to me. It's like taking a man's religion from him."

"Next winter," said McClure, "it 'll probably be on sale in the shops." He wrapped up the picture, furtively watching the dejected face opposite. "Get this nonsense out of your head, Hardy," he said. "Mrs. McClure wouldn't like it. Take a drink and you'll feel all right."

Hardy was moodily silent, and the invitation was repeated.

"I'll go you," he said, straightening up. "Whiskey."

It was his first taste of the liquor, and, as regarded immediate effects, McClure had prescribed wisely. His sense of loss left him, and his world again became stable and secure. But he talked volubly of Mrs. McClure's wonderful grace of movement, and would have returned to the theatre to see more of it.

"There's no use," said McClure. "She's done her turn—that one dance on the darkened stage—and she doesn't dance again."

"Well, let's have another drink." The substitute seemed adequate. But it reversed his perspective, and his sense of loss returned. Also was borne within him a growing sense of injury, of injustice, and unreasoning hatred of this calm, well-dressed despoiler who smiled so triumphantly at him—who, even when proved wrong, acted as though in the right. As the fumes permeated his brain, his features stiffened, the little pucker between his eyebrows became a

menacing scowl, and he stared steadily at the doubled image of McClure, who fidgeted.

"You've had enough whiskey, I should judge," he remarked.

Hardy did not answer. His mind was considering his own muscular development and the softened physique of the once impressive McClure. Why should he permit it? Because McClure had mastered him as an untried boy? Because there was any right, or justice, in his stand? There was not. The picture belonged to him. He had preserved it through the years, had owned it by right of possession had improved it and framed it. Mrs. McClure was the only lawful contestant, and she had not spoken. And she would not—could not—sanction this if she did speak.

It has been said that there is more murder in two drinks of whiskey than in a larger number. Hardy had no theories—merely a lively belief in his duty to himself; which was to enwrap that insolent creature in his powerful arms and crush the conceit out of it. Had McClure maintained his calm, the mood might have left Hardy in a minute or two, but he pushed back his chair and arose to his feet with an assumed yawn. Then Hardy went over the table, brushing the picture to the floor, and the two men clinched, McClure cursing, Hardy uttering incoherent growls.

Locked tightly, they reeled about, and their first few steps crushed the picture on the floor. Noticing this, and enraged still more by the knowledge, Hardy

ceased his stricture on McClure's ribs, pushed him away, and struck out with his fist. McClure went down in a heap, and Hardy sprang for the picture. The glass was broken, and the beautiful face marred and all but obliterated by the twisting stamp of a boot-heel. Waiters were assisting McClure to rise; and others laid their hands upon Hardy, roughly at first, then gently, as they saw tears in the eyes that gazed at the ruined picture.

"You d—d lunatic," stormed McClure, as, with torn garments and bleeding face, he strove to shake off the waiters and get to him. But without their knowing why, perhaps, the sympathy of all was against him, and he was held tightly while Hardy, the berserk gone from him, was permitted to get his hat and leave the café. At the door he turned and tossed the wrecked picture back at its recent claimant. It was of no further use.

To steady himself he walked vigorously, far into the country and back, and thus unknowingly eliminated the later effects of the liquor, so that when he had reached his studio at three in the morning, clear-headed and tired, he could see no connection between his drinking and his rage. It was all a natural result of McClure's inconsiderate selfishness. As for the whiskey—it had done him good; it had lessened his grief at the loss of his picture; and in this dangerous frame of mind he went to sleep, awakening at noon.

He expected arrest, and remained in his studio,

awaiting it, until dark; then, half-mad from the strain on his weakened nervous system, and depressed by the sight of the empty spot on the wall, he went forth to seek it; but policemen let him pass, and he went to his usual place for dinner, then to the theatre that he had gone to the evening before—not with any definite purpose of meeting McClure and having it out with him, but to see the elderly Berry do her turn. He went where his wandering steps took him, for he was a man without a present object in life. The emotions and the influences that had governed all his acts for two years were, for the time at least, annulled. No one had ridiculed him for years; he was not a milksop nor a coward; he had disproved all that, and had acquitted himself to his satisfaction in his encounter with McClure. But his beautiful angel of good was gone. And so this well-found, well-equipped, but rudderless ship drifted into the theatre, there to be refitted.

With his mind prepared, he gave a better attention to the spectacle, and searched, in the dim, red glow, for some resemblance between the Berry McClure of the picture and the Berry McClure on the stage. He found it, in certain phases of inaction, in the poise of the dancer's head, in the contour of the hair; but the features, rendered indefinite by the subdued glow of red, bore more relation to those of the old lady he had seen at home four years before. It was Mrs. McClure, no doubt of it.

This point settled, and McClure being nowhere in sight, he gave himself up to a sensuous delight in her dancing and in the blood-stirring music, applauding insistently with the audience, and leaving the theatre when the dance had been repeated, in order to hold in his mind the fascinating music and the vision of his goddess, redeemed by the obscuring red glow from the wrinkles of age to the beauty and grace of youth. He had seen by the programme that Berry McClure appeared in a speaking part later in the evening; but as this would necessarily involve strong light on the stage, he would not see it and spoil the effect.

And the one-idea man, with a new idea in place of the old, went dreaming about the streets, drinking occasional drams, because they did him much good, and no harm, and retired late, unsteady of feet and uncertain of thought. But over and above the confusion in his brain the graceful figure of Berry McClure rose supreme, and he sank into sleep with the thrilling music tinkling in his ears and an angel in a red glow dancing upside down on the ceiling.

In the morning his head was bursting, but he applied the world-wide remedy—more whiskey—and again attended the theatre in the evening, leaving, as before, at the end of the dance. He saw nothing of McClure, nor did he think about him, until, chancing to wander past the stage entrance of the theatre, about the time the performers were emerging, he

was halted by the usual crowd of on-lookers, and heard one say to another: "It's the only Berry. See her?"

Pushing his way through the crowd, to where the bright light from the entrance illuminated a cab at the curb, he saw McClure assisting a slightly built, gray-haired lady into it. McClure turned before following, and for a moment his eyes rested upon Hardy, but he gave no sign of recognition. When he had entered, Hardy watched the cab turn around in the street, and as it rolled away into the darkness beyond the illumination, he saw her face peering through the window, and beside it an extended forefinger pointing, seemingly at him.

"That's it," he muttered, angrily; "he's showing her the nice boy."

He had recognized the stern-faced old stepmother, and his anger was directed, not so much at McClure for pointing at him, as at himself for his weakness in seeking a view of her, and thus spoiling his darling illusion. It required much whiskey and many visits to the theatre before the dimmed red vision on the stage had effaced the picture of the commonplace old lady on the street, by which time his store of money was exhausted and the theatrical company, having finished its schedule, about starting on the road.

Utterly irresponsible now, he would have followed had he the money. Without it he was forced to remain, brooding in his studio, and staring for hours

at an empty spot on the wall. In his short and savage struggle for a foothold, he had made no friends that would avail him at this stage. Men who, before his collapse, had respected him for the work he had done, yet had feared his personality—his steadfast stare from under arching eyebrows, his quick, nervous speech, and the silent antagonism contained in his powerful physique—washed their hands of him now. And because there was not one man, woman, or child who dared, or cared, to advise, or even ridicule him, the strong man, whose strength came from without, went downward like the veriest weakling.

His fall was as rapid as his rise. Unable to concentrate his mind on his work, he could not fill his orders, and soon lost his studio. He would not go to sea because he now regarded it as a step away from his peculiar ideals. When necessity at last compelled him to seek employment, the cluster of chances called luck ran against him until he had pawned the last pawnable article and borrowed from the last available acquaintance. Then his landlady turned him out of the room he had rented on the loss of his studio, holding his trunk and worthless contents, and his tramping of the streets wore his shoes to the uppers, while his clothing, from lack of care, took on the flavor and seeming of vagrancy.

At this stage of his descent there came a healthy reaction of feeling. He ceased to curse the aged and agile Berry for a siren that had bewitched him,

and cursed himself for a fool; but it came too late to help. Though he had long refrained from drinking through lack of money, his connections were now severed and other ambitious and reliable men had taken his place. So he knew the bitter struggle of the laborer out of work. He remained honest and never begged, but sought odd jobs of any kind, from a day's shift with a shovel, to carrying bags and lifting trunks at stations, finding at the lower levels of labor the fiercest competition, and himself —an artist—the least equipped of all competitors, blaming himself the more as he descended, and only occasionally hating the red vision of the darkened stage, until, on a cold and cloudy evening, as he shivered in the lee of a corner of the slums, there came to him what seemed an omen of good. In the light from the saloon window behind him he examined a soiled and tattered fragment of a magazine which he had picked from the gutter. It was a well-illustrated periodical, and on a page of photograph cuts, labelled "Famous Beauties of the Metropolis," was the picture of his ideal, just a little older than the last he had seen, just a little more womanly and beautiful, but with the same uplifting of the large eyes and the same wonderful crown of hair. He looked for explanatory text, but found none; nor could he find on the torn and grimy pages a date or publishing name to identify the issue. He kissed the soiled page, while tears came to his eyes; he breathed in sobs, and might have knelt down

and prayed had he been left alone. But a seamy-faced man in a warm overcoat halted before him, and remarked that it was a cold night.

Hardy, with chattering teeth, agreed that it was, and the man suggested that, as he looked half-frozen, he step inside and take a bracer.

Strong though he was physically, Hardy might not have survived many such nights; yet in his new mood he would assuredly have declined the invitation had not the stranger volunteered the information that the lunch within was good and hot, and free for all. He tore out the page of pictures, put it in his pocket, and followed the man into the bar-room.

He had thought the picture an omen of good. It was; he wakened in the forecastle of an out-going ship, "shanghaied" without clothing. And in this ship, bound for Bombay, his reconstruction began.

IV

While unrestricted contemplation of the sea in its various phases is not antagonistic to the artistic temperament — poets and artists finding much inspiration therein—yet the working economy of ship-board life is such as to extract, or at least bring under control, the artistic side of any temperament exposed to it. Young men mature at twenty-seven, not at twenty-one, and Hardy, twenty-four and a

half years old when shanghaied, had still two and a half years to live before his character would become fixed. In this time much happened to him. It had taken six months to reduce him to vagrancy; it took ten more—and the details of his upbuilding were as harrowing as those of his descent—to develop in him sufficient mental power to save him from any but the very mildest friction with environment, by which time the ship had returned to Liverpool, where the whole crew was "worked out," as the process of getting rid of men in foreign ports is termed. And in this big city he walked the streets as he had done at San Francisco, for just one day, and then sought the captain at his hotel, asking that he save him from the land. The captain had liked the nervous, but intelligent and willing young sailor, and, as the officers had quit after working out the crew, he placed him on board as ship-keeper, and later took him to sea as third mate.

Hardy now considered his career determined. He had secured a good sea-chest, and on the inside of the lid pasted the picture he had torn from the magazine, and which he had preserved. It was still potent for good, and under its influence he mastered the study of navigation. Then his captain made him second mate and tutored him still more, until he had reached the critical age of twenty-seven, when he signed him on as chief officer—a complete man, strong in mind as he was in body, quick-witted and confident, with the eye of a mastiff, a voice like a trumpet-blast,

and the artistic part of his soul reduced to a fetich worship of a dream goddess, whose faded likeness ornamented his chest-lid. There was also a devil in this creed of his—an image oft called to his mind as he watched men drinking—a red and wrinkled, elflike creature, dancing furiously to a weird tune, every note of which held a plaint of mental agony; for it had jangled in his ears while he sank in the maelstrom of city life. But that the goddess should bless him further, or the devil afflict him again, never entered his thoughts. Both happened, however, the affliction first.

He was again at Liverpool, where his ship had taken in ballast for New York. On the evening before sailing-day he went ashore for a stroll, and in front of a brightly lit theatre entrance was touched on the shoulder. Turning, he beheld McClure, in the same immaculate evening dress, older, shrewder of face than ever, but without that quizzical, exasperating smile.

"Well, Hardy," he said, with a little of hesitancy in his voice, "how are you?" He reached forth his hand, and Hardy took it.

There was reason for McClure's embarrassment. It had been a wild-eyed enthusiast whom he had met three years before, and he was now looking into the eyes of a masterful man—one who knew his strength, and whose firmly set mouth was taking on the quizzing expression missing on that of the other.

"Pretty well, thank you, McClure," he answered,

"And how is the battle of life—if the question is pertinent?"

"First rate. Over with the show. In charge now. You look sunburned. Going to sea again?"

"Mate of a ship."

There was a moment's painful silence, then McClure said, haltingly: "Ever drink anything? Let's have a drink. I want to talk with you."

"McClure," said Hardy, gravely, "I took my first drink with you and my last in the gutter. Talk with me right here."

"Well, that's bad," said McClure, brightening a little at Hardy's admission. "But of course, if a man can't stand it, why—"

"McClure, it wasn't the drink that sent me down. It was the loss of what built me up—the picture. And I *can* drink now, safely, but I do not care to."

"The picture. Yes, that's what I meant to speak of. I don't blame you now for sailing into me; but at the time I thought I was acting right."

"You were. It was not my property. I found another in the mud at my last gasp, and have it yet. It fills the bill."

"Did you? Good enough, Hardy—but—you see—well, she seemed to understand this thing better than I, and she wanted you to have that picture, if it did you any good, and I have it for you now. Want it?"

"No, nor any sight, nor sound, of the lady in the flesh. I regard her dancing as an incentive to all

that is weak and evil in me; but when young she wore my ideal of a beautiful face—that is all."

McClure's eyes opened wide, and he said, "But wouldn't you like to meet her—the original of that face?"

"No," answered Hardy, emphatically. "No, I saw enough of her. I ruined myself watching her dance in the dark. I admit I'm too susceptible to whatever is musical, poetic, and artistic; and it's a strong point in an artist. But I'm a practical seaman now, with prospects of a command."

"Did you ever see her in the light?"

"Yes—getting into a cab with you. At the time you pointed me out to her as the nice boy. I realized then what I had tried not to believe—that the most graceful creature in the wide world was your step-mother, a gray-haired old lady, and that was enough."

McClure laughed heartily. "It *is* rather funny, isn't it," he said. "Yes, I pointed you out to her, and told her all about you. She's been interested ever since. But I want you to know, Hardy, that my attitude at the time was simply to save her from annoyance. Cranks annoyed her, and you gave promise of being an all-round crank, though you've made good since. But I think you ought to meet her. Have supper with us after the show."

"Thank you, McClure, but I'd rather meet the devil."

"Well," said McClure, laughing again, as he con-

sulted his watch, "I must travel on now. I'll see you again. Suppose you go inside. That red dance is just going on the stage. If you want to see it show my card at the door, and pass in. I'll be back and join you before long. I want you to meet her."

Fingering the card which McClure handed him, he watched as he hurried away, and, as he turned his head to glance across the street, saw that he still was laughing. The inherent sensitiveness to ridicule, though not played upon for years, was nevertheless a potent force within him, and, prompted by it, he did what he would not have done for a better friend than McClure: he boldly dared the devil of his creed. He entered the theatre, to look again at the aged siren that had once bewitched and unmanned him—to learn, if possible, just how ridiculous he might seem in the eyes of McClure.

The card passed him in but did not secure him a seat, and he lounged over the rear chairs as he had done a lifetime before. The number had just begun; the theatre and audience were different, of course, but there was the same darkened stage reddened by the hidden glow, the same costumes on the performers, the same weird, jangling music from the orchestra, the same "girl to the right." And in her dancing was the same poetry of motion, the same innocent grace and abandon of happy childhood; and to John Hardy, chief mate and master of men, came the old mental and moral intoxication.

With glistening eyes he applauded furiously, and

when the dance was ended went out into the street as he had been wont to do before—to save to himself his illusions. Then, from association of ideas, perhaps, or from shock and a reckless abandon to the artistic and irresponsible elements of his character, he thought of liquor and began drinking—drinking as men may under strong excitement after long abstinence. He had a later fleeting remembrance that he met McClure at some time during the evening, and that McClure avoided him; but he cared little for that. Strong in his mind, however, through all this drift and disintegration was the protective instinct, and he knew that he must not go aboard his ship in his present condition; so, at three in the morning, when barely able to sign his name, he registered at a hotel and went to sleep with a sylphlike image dancing in his brain, and his life's ambition crystallized into an intent to see her dance, ship or no ship, on the following evening. Had he wakened in time to go on board, however, he might have resigned the intent; but when he reached the dock at mid-day he found the ship gone, and learned from the dock-master that a new mate had taken his place at the last moment, and that the angry skipper had sent his chest, his discharge, and his balance of pay to the ship's agent.

And now he realized his danger, and, so realizing, drew upon the reserve strength acquired through his years of self-discipline, and forbade himself further indulgence in liquor; but this did not preclude his nightly attendance at the theatre to witness the

part of the performance that had enthralled him; and the artistic debauch was as demoralizing to his mind as though, normal of soul, he had merely taken to drink. He saw McClure occasionally, but there was no mistaking McClure's wish to avoid him, and, as Hardy was not particular, they did not meet.

It was only when he found the theatre occupied by another company, and spent an evening of serious reflection consequent upon this, that he took thought of his prospects of advancement at sea—if not irrevocably ruined, at least put back for a great many years. Then he relegated the dancer to her legitimate place as his evil genius, and, being now a man out of work, took cheap passage to New York, where he might hope to get a second mate's or, at least, a boatswain's berth.

He sailed in a mammoth liner whose rules forbade him, as steerage passenger, to walk abaft a certain imaginary line athwart the deck. He was content with this ruling, and hoped that it also applied to the saloon passengers, keeping them aft; for when he drew near it on the first evening out he saw, far down the long promenade-deck, the mysterious McClure, pacing up and down in a warm ulster. And sounds of music and singing from the saloon—with an occasional fragment of a weird, jangling dance tune—apprised him that with him on the steamer must be the whole theatrical company, and, necessarily, among them the aged, agile, and fascinating Mrs.

Berry McClure—an interesting old lady, no doubt, but one whom he did not care to meet personally.

Yet he missed the steadying influence of the picture on the lid of his chest—stored in the baggage-room out of his reach. He had himself well in hand—he had drunk nothing since his last outbreak; but the memory of the dance tune—a memory now, for he heard it no more—called to him continually, and fought down the memory of the face in the picture. He carefully avoided being seen by McClure, but haunted the dividing-line on the deck when night had fallen, straining his ears as saloon doors opened for snatches of the sounds from within; and one evening, while the big, steel ship was charging over the Georges Banks through a moon-lit fog, he climbed a stanchion to the boat-deck and made his way aft towards the saloon skylight, screened by the fog from the officers on the bridge, yet able to see clearly in the moonlight from above. He could not have told what he wanted, except to hear that tantalizing music.

As he passed a small companion-door opening from a flight of stairs, there stepped out before him a figure in a long cloak and hood. The hood but partly confined a mass of wavy hair, under which was a fair young face with large, dark eyes upturned to the moonlight. They settled on Hardy and pierced him to the soul; for they were the eyes he had painted into the picture, and the wavy hair was of the golden tint he had chosen from his sub-

conscious knowledge. And the girl was the living, breathing original of the whole—his angel of good.

With his tongue thick against the dry roof of his mouth, he watched her with staring eyes, and she stepped back a pace, then waited, as though expecting him to speak. After a moment he did so, hardly knowing what he said.

"It's you," he stammered. "I didn't know—didn't think to see you here."

"Nor I you," she answered, pleasantly, as though addressing an acquaintance, and in a musical voice that seemed familiar. "But I knew that you were in Liverpool. Oh, I know all about you!" Her big eyes smiled on him. "You are the boy who became an artist. I saw you in San Francisco through a cab window—and then you went to sea again, and are now an officer, I'm *so* glad you've succeeded."

"In God's name," he blurted out, hoarsely, "are you living or dead? I mean, are you old or young? What are you? Who are you?"

She drew herself up, and the smile left her face. "I'm afraid, Mr. Hardy," she said, coldly, "that you have been drinking again. I am sorry, for I had felt—I had—oh, I *am* sorry."

With his mouth partly open, and his fingers stretching and closing at arm's-length by his side, he stared stupidly at the beautiful face, unable to analyze the impressions surging in his brain—unable to grasp the purport of her words or frame an intelligent response. She turned away, as though

to leave him there; but her eyes fixed upon a point over his shoulder—at something distant. And as she looked the large eyes grew still larger, the pretty lips parted, and, coincident with a yell from the lookout in the crow's-nest, she uttered a little scream. Then came an explosive order from the bridge: "Starboard the wheel. Starboard, for your life." As Hardy turned to look, she sprang to his side, and there was nothing elderly nor feeble nor ghostly in the clutch which she laid on his arm.

A black shape was looming out of the fog, nearly dead-ahead, and in three seconds it had taken form, the sharp bow of a steamer heeling slightly to the wind; then, topping the black hull, came the white bridge into view from the blanket of fog; then there was a quiver, and a grinding, tearing, crashing sound of riven steel. Shouts came from forward and screams from below, soon drowned in the louder—still louder and louder—sounds of grinding and tearing and crashing. Some projection in the bow, an eye-bolt, a dead-light, possibly a port-hinge, had caught the sharp, knifelike bow of the stranger and directed it inward. She was still coming, splitting their ship, and she only stopped when the larger momentum of her heavier victim overcame her own. Then her stern swung off to starboard, the sounds began in a new key, and her nose twisted off in the wound it had made. Down by the head she drifted into the fog, while the ship she had rammed, with

part of her side sliced off and five compartments flooded, lurched heavily to starboard and settled.

V

In the scenes of horror played upon the reeling deck that night, Hardy played many parts, but retained a clear recollection of none. One idea predominated to the exclusion of rational thought—a creature lent from Heaven was in his care, and for her safety he, and he alone, was to be held accountable. And not only for her safety, but the safety of others as helpless as she. It was given him this night to prove himself. He was to be tested this night for strength, not weakness; and grateful to the Fates, he accepted the challenge. The dazed idealist gave way to the practical man and sailor.

Boats and life-rafts were to be cleared away and lowered by frenzied wretches that knew not how. With the girl clinging to his arm, he directed by voice and example. Women and children were to be placed first, he said; and though knives flashed and pistols spoke among the crazed and struggling mob that surged up from below, not a woman or child who reached the boat-deck was left behind. He saw to it; and in the last boat to leave the davits was the girl in his care. And over her, as she crouched in the stern-sheets, he stood with half an oar, guarding her from those who would crowd her.

He never remembered that oar, but some who did said that he had broken it himself.

But the Fates were still unsatisfied, and demanded more of him. A hail came from above, before the tackles were unhooked, and in the darkness Hardy made out a man leaning over the rail of the promenade-deck.

"That you, Hardy," he called. "Got her, have you? That's good. Stand by, and I'll come down."

It was McClure. He mounted the rail and sprang for the after-tackle with the confidence of a sailor; but missed his grip by a mere inch and came floundering down in a heap, striking heavily on the gunwale and tumbling overboard. The girl screamed.

"Unhook forward there," roared Hardy, as he released the after-tackle. "Out oars and stand by." They obeyed him eagerly. McClure came up twenty feet astern, and gurgled: "Help. I'm crippled, Hardy. I can't swim."

There was not a rope to throw; and there was a frightened and desperate crowd of firemen at the oars, who dipped them and pulled ahead.

"Back water," thundered Hardy, his broken oar upraised. "Back water, or I'll brain you all on the thwarts." They obeyed him again, protesting that the boat was full; but the stroke-oarsman protested too bravely, and the heavy club came down on his head. He was not disabled, though inclined to silence, and the boat came back; but McClure had sunk.

"Save him—oh, save him!" wailed the girl; and Hardy shed his coat, peering into the black water beneath. There was a movement not five feet away—just a momentary appearance of a head—and a gurgling gasp, and silence.

"Hold the boat where it is," said he, laying down the oar; then he dove, and reached the drowning man before beginning the upward swim. Seizing him by the hair and keeping behind him he reached the surface, then, swimming on his back with the quiescent McClure above him, he regained the boat. McClure was pulled in, but when Hardy attempted to follow, he met an obstacle. The stroke-oarsman was erect on his feet with the broken oar poised.

"Stay where ye are, d—n ye," he bellowed. "Ye'll hit me on the head, will ye? Didn't we say the boat's full? Go ahead on the oars, ye fools. D' ye want this bucko to swamp us? Get back, d—n ye." He brought the oar down, once on Hardy's head, again on his hands. Hardy released his hold and sank, half-stunned, with the screams of the girl ringing in his ears. But he came to the surface conscious, and clutched the oar, which the murderous fireman had flung at him. It was small support, but better than nothing, and clinging to it, paddling weakly, he had not recovered his dazed wits before the boat was hidden by the darkness and fog. But for many moments he could hear the pleading expostulations of the girl and the angry profanity of the men.

He swam, when he could, away from the sinking hull, until it, too, was hidden in the fog; and when he heard a rushing of air and hissing of steam, followed by deep, muffled reports of bursting compartments, he swam back, knowing that the ship had sunk, and that there would be wreckage better than his oar to support him.

He found a grating, climbed upon it, and floated until the fog lifted at daylight, showing a sea dotted with fishing-craft, and here and there a steamer, but no sign of other wreckage, nor of the ship's boats. A fishing-schooner picked him up about noon, transferred him to an inbound liner, and on the next day he was in New York, half-mad, with the problem still unsolved.

Was the elderly Mrs. McClure gifted with power to renew her youth? Or was she still young, but able to assume the gray hair and wrinkled face he had seen on the street of his native village, which he had identified so often in the dim, red glow of the darkened stage, and which had appeared to him, framed by the window of the cab? Was this a case of dual existence, of polarized personality? Could the good in her nature segregate itself into the figure and face of a fair young girl whose mere picture could uplift him, and the evil take the form of a wrinkled elf whose dancing could utterly demoralize him? If so, McClure's mysterious conduct was in a measure justified; and McClure could explain it

if he were alive. He promised himself that McClure *would* explain—when he got his hands upon him again.

Clad in another man's hat and jacket, with his damp roll of bills secure in the fob-pocket of his shrunken trousers—an object of suspicion to any metropolitan policeman—he visited the office of the steamship company, where an anxious crowd prevented him from getting immediate information; but in this crowd, vociferating loudly for his pay, he found a large Hibernian fireman, and him he knocked on his back, demanding, as he struck, news of the woman and disabled man he had run away with. Before the fireman was conscious enough to answer, however, Hardy was pinioned by two policeman, each as broad-shouldered and muscular as himself, and would assuredly have been marched off to jail had not an elegantly attired, elderly woman stepped out of the crowd and spoken for him. Again his thickened tongue went to the roof of his mouth, and his eyes bulged painfully, while he listened to her vehement defence of him—which defence included a condensed description of his heroic mastery of the crazed mob on the boat-deck, his rescue of Mr. Thomas McClure, and his desertion by the crew while Mr. McClure was unconscious in the boat. As she spoke her stern old face became glorified with enthusiasm, and the policemen slackened their hold on Hardy.

"But what 'd you slug him fur?" asked one of them of Hardy.

"He was the one who clubbed me away from the boat," he answered, as connectedly as was possible.

It served him right to knock him down," declared the old lady. "He struck him twice with the oar—twice—once on the head and again on the hands. It was cruel, horrible, murderous." She covered her face with her hands, as though to shut out the sight, and Hardy, staggered by the situation, would have felt no further jar to his nerves had she declared her dual personality right there—announced herself as an eye-witness—and was in no way surprised when she said, determinedly, to the officers: "You shall not arrest Mr. Hardy. Arrest that murderer. I will furnish the evidence."

"Run him over to the house, Bill," said the officer who had spoken. "He's too noisy, anyhow, over his dom pay."

Then, while the dazed stoker was led to jail, the equally dazed Hardy was led to the street by his defender, whose stern and wrinkled face sweetened to a smile as she halted before a hansom at the curb.

"I feel that I have always known you, Mr. Hardy," she said. "You were pointed out to me one evening when I was in a cab; and my business down-town to-day was to get word of you, if possible. You can understand, I hope, how deeply we feel our debt to you, and how happy I shall be to carry home the news of your safety. Tom is more than grateful; he declares that he surely would have drowned that night—he had sprained his knee and ankle in the

fall, and is a poor swimmer—but for you. More than this, Mr. Hardy—knowing your story, and the curious and wonderful effect upon your life of that photograph—knowing, too, the strenuous effort you put forth, I have taken the liberty of investigating your standing in artistic circles. Your work was well liked by New York editors, most of whom I know very well; and we mean to use every endeavor to induce you to give up that hard life at sea and resume your rightful occupation."

"Why—how—" he stammered; but she interrupted.

"Oh, we'll tell you all we've learned, when you come. We want you up to the house. I am in a great hurry now, and must leave you. Let's see"—she produced a card-case, while her sharp glance ran up and down the whole bewildered and dishevelled six feet of him—"this is Monday. Can you call a week from this evening?"

"Y-yes," he said, taking the card she handed him.

"Very well; we'll expect you."

She entered the cab and smiled a good-bye as it drove away.

On the card was an address—strange to him, of course—but the name was the name he expected to see—"Mrs. Berry McClure."

"I can't make it out," he half groaned, as he walked away. "That's my evil genius, surely, and I ought to avoid her. And what 'll she be next time—

my good or my evil angel? She'll have to change back to prosecute the Irishman."

He had divined the meaning of her sharp, up-and-down inspection of him a moment before, and forthwith sought a tailor, who took his order and delivered the clothing in time. Then, on the evening named, fully convinced that he was in the presence of some strange psychical phenomena, he called at her address, well-clad and presentable, but nervous as a cat, and, on pushing the button of the McClure apartments, was admitted by a vision in silk—his angel of good.

"You're expected," she said, gayly, as she drew him in and closed the door. "Give me your hat, Mr. Hardy." She took it from him, hung it on a rack, and then, sliding her arms around his neck, reached up on tiptoe and kissed him.

"Oh, Berry McClure," sang out a man's voice through a door. "You big girl. I heard you. Come in, Hardy; I'm laid up."

She seized his big hand with her two little ones and led him into a lighted room—the parlor of a "railroad" flat, where McClure was limping to meet them. "I don't care if you did," she said, with a pout. "He saved our lives." She was blushing furiously, but not more so than was Hardy, and McClure, noticing, laughed uproariously.

"No use kicking against Kismet," he said, as he shook Hardy's hand. "I've tried hard to keep you two apart, but I give it up. And, Hardy, old man,

let me congratulate you"—he was still shaking his hand vigorously—"let me congratulate you on what you've done with yourself. You're about the biggest thing I know of to-day; and, by George! you began as the smallest. Just think of yourself—as you were once, and as you were that night outside here, when you cleared away every boat with a girl on your arm. Did she help, Hardy? Was she an inspiration, like the picture?"

McClure had seated himself on the piano-stool and the girl in a chair; both were smiling. But Hardy remained standing, his face now white and set, every nerve strained in the effort at self-command.

"McClure," he said, gravely, "you must bring this to an end. I cannot stand it. I am not built to stand it. I admit being helped by that picture"—their faces sobered when he had got this far—"and I claim to have been ruined by a like influence—a similar appeal to the artistic in my nature. Do you remember?"

McClure, whose face was relaxing a little, nodded, and Hardy continued.

"You told me, McClure," he said, "that the picture was that of your step-mother, Mrs. Berry McClure, taken in youth, and that it was still on sale." McClure's face stiffened.

"Oh, Tom," said the girl, in a tone of protest.

"And I saw your step-mother many times on the stage and recognized her," went on Hardy, his voice growing in strength and earnestness. "And I saw

her under a strong light at the stage entrance, and heard her called Berry McClure by the on-lookers. She was entering a cab with you." McClure's features relaxed again.

"And, as you pointed me out to her, it is only natural that you should tell her what you knew of me, and that she should remember; but"—and Hardy's voice became tense—"out on the Banks, this young lady, the living image of a picture taken forty years ago—according to your account, McClure—informed me that I was pointed out to *her* from a cab window." McClure's face showed the keenest interest.

"And down-town the other day," went on Hardy, "I met the lady I know as your step-mother—whom I know as the dancer—and she told the same story: that *she* was the one to whom I was pointed out. She also displayed knowledge of that night's happenings which I had forgotten myself—which could be possessed by no one but myself or an eye-witness of my acts. She claimed to be such—she promised to testify against the man who drove me away from the boat. She invited me here to meet you and herself, and I find, not her, but her younger self." He bowed deferentially to the girl, his face still white and strained, and his voice hoarse. She had listened, open-eyed; but McClure's old, exasperating, quizzical smile had come back to him.

"And I just heard you call this young lady by the name Berry," continued Hardy, vehemently, ad-

vancing with clinched hands, almost threateningly, towards McClure. "In the name of God, who is Berry McClure, and what? Is she two persons or one; and if one, which? Is she the young girl whose picture made me a man, or is she the old woman whose dancing sent me to hell?"

He paused, and McClure soberly rose to his feet.

"I meant to clear this thing up at Liverpool, Hardy," he said, "but you would not have it, and I knew, too, what you might not have known—that Berry McClure, in either capacity, old or young, would not countenance intoxication. So I was helpless. But things are different after that collision, and I don't doubt that you can come to us at any time, drunk as a lord, and have what you order. Just excuse us a moment, Hardy; I must send Berry on an errand. Come, girl," he added, "out in the hall."

He limped out of the room, and the girl, with an anxious, mystified face, followed him. Hardy heard a muffled confab, and the girl's protesting "no." But it was soon silenced, and McClure returned, seating himself again at the piano.

"Have a cigar, Hardy," he said, reaching for a box on top of the piano. "I smoke all over the place, now that I'm on the sick-list."

Hardy declined.

"Will you stick to the sea, Hardy?"

"No," he answered, gloomily. "At least, I don't know. It depends."

"I see the papers are full of you and your work that night. The company ought to do something handsome for you. Would you take a berth from them—a position on the bridge?" Obviously, McClure was talking to kill time, and Hardy answered as before, "Don't know."

McClure began thrumming the piano, striking improvised chords. But Hardy's savage mood seemed to oppress him; for he said as he fingered the keys: "If you'll think well, and remember, you'll grant that I never lied to you. I allowed you to think what you liked, but, as words go, I was truthful. Candidly, I was not thinking of your interests, but of another's. You know that my chief business in life is to take care of Berry McClure—to protect her from mashers and cranks."

"Possibly," growled Hardy. "But I'm neither.

"Your interests conflicted with mine, just the same," said McClure, as he drummed away on the keys. "I protected mine, having the power at the time. But you proved the stronger, and have forced my hand—not that I ever did, or could, agree to it, but because I have to. I am forced to see your side, which now looks big where it used to look small. It is like taking a natural look through an opera-glass when you had been used to looking through the big end—which makes everything look small."

"I understand the optical principle," said Hardy, rising impatiently to his feet. "But why? What are you driving at? Can you tell me why a picture

made a man of a weakling, and why a poem of motion made a wreck of the man?"

A chirrup sounded from another room.

"I can answer the last," said McClure, somewhat sternly. "It was not the poem, it was whiskey. Here"— he reached for and handed Hardy an opera-glass that had lain on the piano-top—"look through the big end—down through the rooms. See the size of the poem that wrecked you."

Then he pounded the keys, bringing out the wild, weird melody that had sang Hardy downward—the jangling dance tune that he hated and loved. Mechanically, he had taken the opera-glass. "Look through the big end," commanded McClure as he drummed. "Down through the rooms." He put the glass to his eyes and looked—down through the series of rooms in the "railroad flat," to where, in the last room of all, there was a glow of red from a hidden source. In this red glow, projected to a distance by the reversed opera-glass, a costumed woman was dancing with the step, the rhythmical grace, and all the happy abandon of his evil genius. When the music stopped she came on through the rooms and faced him. But it was not the elderly Mrs. McClure; it was the girl, blushing in her worn and faded costume, and with a pained and anxious expression on her face.

Hardy's was the color of a steel engraving.

"This may seem strange to you, Mr. Hardy," she said, with the saddest of smiles, "and perhaps cruel,

after—now that we know—after what my brother told me in the hall—that my dancing was indirectly your undoing. I had only heard about the picture, and I was *so* pleased and complimented. I wanted you to have it. But how could you possibly take me for my mother, even at a distance? Yes, we were both in the cab that evening. Tom told us both, and we both saw you on the curb looking at us. It is so strange."

"Not at all," said McClure, dryly, from the piano-stool. "Only funny—awfully funny—to idealize a picture and hate the original. Hello, here's mother!"

Mrs. McClure, gloved and bonneted, entered the room, and, though his world was chaos for the present, Hardy was able to take her extended hand and respond coherently to her greeting.

On the Rio Grande

THE sun came out hot over the hills to the east, and what little coolness was in the morning air left it. At the bottom of the grayish-brown wall of a deserted adobe house a whitish object glistened whiter as the sun touched it, then faded in the shadow of the building. The mud-colored river below eddied and whirled between its muddy banks, and disappeared down-stream behind a point which formed a part of a mud-colored bottom stretching to the hills a quarter-mile west, where the horizon ended and the mud-colored mesa began. Mud-color was the prevailing hue, around and above; for even the sky might be likened to the inside of a vast mud bake-oven, so dull and dreary and dirty was the general effect of the hot sun and dingy haze.

The whitish object at the foot of the wall moved and disappeared; then, from under a brick around the corner protruded a head—a three-cornered head with glittering eyes and a half-opened mouth from which darted occasionally a red-forked tongue. The head reached out about a foot, and the neck behind

sagged into the dirt, while the adjoining section of body bent itself into a double line of beauty, then it sagged in its turn, and the head and neck extended for a fresh grip on the soil. By this mode of locomotion six feet of rattlesnake, with the whitish object which the sun had kissed quivering and rattling at the tail, came into view from under the house and stretched out on the wooden doorstep to drink in the warmth of the morning.

No sooner was he comfortably settled, however, than he raised his head and sounded his quivering war-cry ominously, but subsided when he heard a voice—a rasping, small voice, yet with a feminine smoothness to it.

"Steady, old man," it said; "it's only me." Then an eight-legged, eight-eyed, hairy thing of horror—a full-grown, black-and-brown female tarantula of six-and-a-half-inch stretch of leg — hopped around the corner. "Good-morning," she added; "had breakfast? Oh, I forgot; you're as irregular at meals as I am. Hot, isn't it?"

"None too hot for me," said the snake, as he reached his head to the edge of the step and looked down at his visitor; "and as for breakfast, I hadn't thought of it since my last meal. It was a tarantula-hawk, and it gave me the stomach-ache."

"Oh, goodness me," shuddered the big spider, while the snake smiled satanically. "I'm sorry if it disagreed with you—indeed I am. But I've heard that tarantula-hawks are good for snakes—good for

the nerves. I wouldn't give up the diet on just one trial."

"I've heard," said the snake, remorselessly, "that they are very bad for tarantulas' nerves. Let's see —how do they treat you folks? Sting you first, don't they—"

"Please don't," interrupted the other.

"Yes, that's it. Sting you first and paralyze you with the poison; then they lug you off to a hole in the ground somewhere around, and lay eggs under your hide, which hatch out in time, and the youngsters feed on your flesh. Wonder how it feels."

"Oh, I don't know—it's too horrid to think of. Please, don't speak of it," whimpered the tarantula.

"Yes, yes, old lady," said the snake, soothingly; "it is horrid—for you; but it's fine for the little folks. I wonder, too," he added, sweetly, "how a nice, fat tarantula tastes. It must be good."

The nervous female hopped off beyond the snake's striking distance at this, and her eight little eyes lighted with suspicion, which the teasing snake observed.

"Oh, don't be alarmed," he said, good-humoredly. "I'm not hungry."

"How did you get the hawk," she asked, from behind an adobe brick that lay on the ground; "tell me."

"How did I get her? Like this. Suppose you are the hawk, and I am laying out on a big rock as I am here; I coil up like this—see?"

"How?" asked the spider, eagerly.

"Like this—come closer—jump up on that other brick so you can see—there. Now, I coil up like this with my head in the middle, while you—the hawk, of course—light on a stone close by—understand?"

"Yes," gasped the tarantula, her eagerness to hear how the terrible wasp which preyed on her family had been disposed of overcoming her suspicion of the rattlesnake.

"You settle down on the stone," went on the instructor, "and go to flashing and preening your red wings, while I'm getting all ready to receive you—like this."

The last two words were spoken while the snake lay stretched out over the brick where the tarantula had hopped to watch him; but, quick as is the stroke of a rattlesnake — and no camera mechanism can work fast enough to photograph him in progress—the tarantula, no sluggard herself, had seen him start, and leaped into the air just in time to drag the ends of her hairy hind legs clear of the wide-open mouth and spitting fangs of her guileful tutor. She came down on his back, inserted the point of a half-inch mandible under a scale, gave it a tweak, and hopped off to a safe distance before the snake recovered.

"That's the way I got her," murmured the discomfited deceiver, as he crawled back to the step; "dead easy."

"I see," answered the trembling tarantula, who

had been nearer death than ever before. "And would you mind telling me whether she jumped, or tried to —in fact, whether she is quicker than I am in her movements?"

"Quicker than you?" said the snake, who saw a chance to bolster up a shaken reputation. "Why, you don't mean that you're at all quick, do you. I was only showing you how I got her, and you nearly jumped out of your skin. Quicker than you? Well, I should say so. A tarantula-hawk is nearly—not quite—but nearly as quick in her movements as I am"; and as he made this proud concession the soul of the tarantula sank within her; for she had hoped, for the moment, that she possessed power to cope with her mortal enemy—which is really the case, for nothing of its inches alive can conquer a tarantula, unless it is another tarantula, when it fights without the hereditary fear which the red-winged tarantula-hawk inspires and depends on. But she possessed the trusting credulity of her sex, and the snake was a liar; so any good in the shape of confidence in herself which might have developed from the trial of skill was lost.

"They tell me," said the snake, malevolently, as he coiled up again, "that a tarantula stung by a hawk never dies until the last young grub has eaten himself to full size and fatness and gone forth to life's battle—that, though the motor nerves are paralyzed, the sensory nerves are keenly alive, and every bite on the living tissue is felt. How is it?"

"Let us change the subject — please," said the spider, piteously; "let us speak of pleasanter things. I heard a ranchero say the other day that he would ride ten miles to kill a rattlesnake. What a spirit to show."

"And I'll crawl twenty to kill a ranchero," snapped the snake, spitefully. "I never met but one, and he nearly broke my back, just because I struck at his wife, too. I never harmed him."

"Did you get her?" asked the tarantula, with aroused interest.

"Of course I did," answered the snake, proudly. "I never fail—that is," he added, remembering the recent fiasco, "when I try."

"How was it? Tell me—hist! Wait; don't speak."

The tarantula had shrunk into herself—almost. Her legs were drawn close together, and her body touched the ground, while the eight wicked little eyes watched the approach of a blundering, buzzing horse-fly which circled above. A few irregular spirals he made in the air, then swooped down and landed within a yard of the quiescent enemy, darted here and there as though uncertain of what he came for, and—went to sleep.

The thing of legs and hair and fangs sailed through the air on a parabolic curve, and came down where the fly had been but was not; for, coincident with the beginning of that curve, a straight line had begun from a hole under another adobe brick six feet from the fly in the opposite direction, and this

straight line had struck the sleeper while the tarantula was still rising, and carried him with it a foot farther, where it stopped and resolved into a forty-legged centipede, eight inches long, bilious of soul as he was of complexion, and of healthy voracity of appetite, as was evidenced by the agitated horse-fly held firmly in his mouth.

"Excuse me," said the tarantula, as she hopped away; "I didn't know you wanted it."

"Do you know it now?" answered the centipede, between his teeth, as, devouring the fly, he glared viciously at her with the cluster of hawse-pipes that he used for eyes.

"No offence, I assure you," said the tarantula, hopping to a third brick at a safe distance from the snake—though, if a fight were forced upon her with either, she would have preferred doing battle with the rattler, who himself might hesitate to attack this heavily armored pirate of forty guns. The rattlesnake stretched out to full length in the sun and quivered silently and joyously, for the tarantula knew now exactly what he felt, and without his telling her, too. Nothing was said among the trio until the last edible portion of the fly had disappeared; then the centipede, twirling his forward legs around his mandibles, and good-humored enough after his meal to speak first, remarked to the air, "Saw a tarantula-hawk this morning."

"Where—oh, where was it?" asked the nervous one, in alarm, while the snake chuckled audibly.

"Down by the river. Asked me if I'd seen any tarantulas around here."

"And of course you said no," said she, anxiously.

"And of course I said yes—and described one I know, too. There's too many tarantulas in the country. Flies are getting scarce."

"Oh, dear me, how unkind! Now I'll have to move again, and there's no place to go but back where I came from."

"Well, go back."

"I just will—as soon as my little ones can travel. There are no mean centipedes there, anyhow, though I admit there was a strong sentiment against me when I left; but I hope I have lived that down. I think it is too bad. I seem to arouse nothing but antagonism and unkindness wherever I go."

"We thought when you came that you were travelling for your health," remarked the snake, as he shifted end for end to warm his other side. "What did you do back there, old girl?"

"They threw stones and hot water at me and I ran away from them, if that is what you mean," said the tarantula, with an injured air. "I did nothing to deserve it. It was only my weak love for children."

"You love children as you do your husbands, I suppose," said the snake. "How many husbands have you had, widow?"

"Six," she answered, promptly; and as the query opened up a field of reminiscence, she forgot her sense of injury and treated them to a long discourse

—after the manner of widows—on the merits and defects of her several consorts. The first was good —very good, indeed; she knew at the time that she could never replace him; the third was next best, and the second, fourth, and fifth were not good at all, having acquired an unfortunate appetite for alkali-water and green caterpillar, which made them taste bad. She had hoped that the sixth, who was young and fresh and unsullied by the world, would take the taste of alkali and caterpillar from her mouth, but he didn't; he got away, and crawled into a hole too small for her to enter, and died there. She often visited his grave.

"Accept the assurance, dear madam," said the rattlesnake, politely, "of our utmost confidence in the sincerity of your grief. It was, no doubt, a heart-rending sorrow and sad disappointment—you unconscionable old cannibal," he added, in a different tone, for the rattlesnake has some pride and a few virtues: he fights fair, for instance, and gives warning before an attack. Then, too, he never eats other snakes; he leaves that to his hated enemy, the black snake, who eats him.

"What do you think of that for conjugal felicity, old Ironsides?" he said to the immovable centipede. "Eats her husbands before the honeymoon's well begun. Steady, steady, old man. Don't be alarmed, widow; he's only discovered his shadow, and is taking a fall out of it."

The snake's explanation may have been the true

one, for in his melancholy ferocity the centipede could find the animus of an assault on his shadow; but it is more than likely that the widow had talked him to sleep, and the snake's innocent question had startled him. He had sunk his forty legs, his two bow-anchors and stern grappling-hooks into the soil, and now lay, quivering with rage, in a small cloud of dust, while his hawse-pipes shone luridly.

When the dust had settled, the snake repeated the query.

"I take no interest in such humbug," he snarled, in answer.

"Of course not," sneered the tarantula; "you're all alike in your family—neither father nor mother nor sister nor brother. I once heard an old professor—I got him afterwards—say that centipedes were unisexual; and nobody ever called me such a name. No wonder you think it humbug. Unisexual—unisexual—humph! I wouldn't talk."

"Don't get sarcastic, old lady," said the snake. "It don't become your loving nature. Tell us how your fondness for children got you into trouble."

"Oh, it was such a beautiful boy," she said, in a burst of enthusiasm; "such a lovely, darling little child. I used to watch him from the bunch-grass as he played about the door. Soft, yellow hair he had, and eyes like the blue of the sky after the rain, and such a pink-and-white cheek—so full and curving and dimpled. I loved that boy; but he wouldn't let me approach him; he'd always run into his

mother and describe me horridly. Then she'd come out and I'd have to go. But I loved him just as much; and after a while I gave up trying to make his acquaintance out-of-doors, and crawled into the house one evening while they were at supper, and got up to the ceiling, where I found a good place right over the bed; then I waited until they had gone to sleep, and a long time after, before I made up my mind. Yes, I hung there, looking down at the lovely pink cheek of that child sleeping between his parents, a long time; then I crawled carefully along until the darling cheek was right beneath me, let go, turned over, and landed right where I wanted to." She paused, swelled up and subsided, as though with an ecstatic sigh.

"And then?" asked the centipede, standing high on all forty legs, and bristling with curiosity and other emotions.

"And then?" answered the tarantula, with mild surprise. "Why, then, I took a bite, of course."

"Oh," said the centipede, as he sank down again, "I couldn't help asking; but, do you know, I thought for a moment you were telling one of those catchy stories, and were going to say you went right away."

"I did go right away; there was a shocking hubbub, and that boy screamed frightfully. I got under the bed, then they scalded me out, and I found a hole in the floor. But they discovered me under the house next morning, and I only escaped death by hanging upside down all day between the

beams until night came, by which time I had recovered from the shock and got to the grass in the darkness."

"Reminds me," said the rattlesnake, whom the sun and the conversation had warmed to a reminiscent mood, "of my experience on a ranch. They chased me with sticks and stones, and, as I told you, the boss nearly broke my back. You see, I found a nest of eggs, and as I am very fond of eggs, and as fully competent to attend to them as any measly old hen, I chased her off and coiled up on them myself. Then comes a woman with some tomfool remarks about how 'Biddy didn't like the nest, and she'd change it — put the eggs somewhere else.' Now I was satisfied with that nest just where I found it, and notified her to keep out and mind her own business, but she only got off some more tomfoolery about 'some other hen taking Biddy's nest away from her—some hen with a curious clucking.' Think of that—to liken my rattle to the clucking of a hen. I couldn't stand that insult at all. She stuck her hand in — a white, plump hand it was, too; none of your dried-up, brown claws of the Greaser women—and I let go. Well, of course she screamed and ran—women all do—and out came the men. I had to go and couldn't take an egg with me. I reached grass and hid for a while as they beat up the neighborhood; but when I endeavored to make my way to a tree, where I knew was a deep hole, I was discovered and nearly clubbed to death. I got

away, though, and carried a clear remembrance of the man who clubbed me—the ranchero. He was tall and sunburned, with a black beard and eyes. Some day I'll get him. That was the closest shave I ever had."

"Say," said the tarantula, "that tree with a hole under it—was it close to the house?"

"About forty feet."

"Was there a corral in the same direction?"

"Yes, and a wagon-house."

"And the house had flowers in the window?"

"Yes, and a chimney through the roof, and two doors—"

"And a doorstep—three steps—"

"And there was a windmill pump—"

"And a wood-pile—"

"Yes, yes."

"The same house. Ha-he-he-he-he-ha-ho-ho-ha ha-he."

"The same family. You got the boy; I got the mother. Ho-ho-ho-ho-ha-ha-ha-ho-ho-ho."

Heartily and joyously their laughter arose on the stagnant air—so hearty and joyous and genuinely spontaneous was it that the melancholy but appreciative centipede caught the contagion and responded with a feeble grin. He could not laugh; but then he had no sense of humor, and seemed to be rather ashamed of the momentary weakness; for when the merriment had subsided he said, as though to hide his embarrassment:

"You call that a close shave. How would you like to be rolled up in a flannel shirt and thrown in the river?"

"Wouldn't mind it much," said the snake; "neither would the widow—she's fond of it; but I suppose it's different with you. It's well known that cats, donkeys, tramps, and centipedes detest the water. How was it, old Bilious?"

"I was cold one night and crawled into a cowboys' camp and up the sleeve of one of them. Just as I'd got to his breast and was feeling good and warm, he wakened and closed his hand over me—but not before I'd punished him. He rolled me up in the folds, while his comrades cut the shirt up the side; then, swearing frightfully, he took me to the river and threw me in. I thought my last minute had come. I felt the horrid moisture oozing in and touching me on all sides, but could do nothing. I was imprisoned; but, just as I'd given up all hope, I felt a jar, the folds unwound, and I found a dry, or half-dry, road to the top of a sand-bar in midstream. Three months I waited before the water went down and I could get to land. It was a frightful experience. I have been careful since."

Before the rattlesnake, who had a sarcastic remark for almost all occasions, could comment on this adventure, the vigilant tarantula, from her outpost, called out, "What's that," and darted close to the wall, while the centipede disappeared in the hole under the brick. A broad-horned steer was

charging down past the house, and behind him followed a large bay horse with a rider—a sunburned, black-bearded man whirling a lariat and shouting.

The snake had thrown himself into a coil, sounding his rattle and balancing his head back and forth about six inches above. But though the steer passed within striking distance, he passed safely; it was when the horse and rider reached the steps that the snake became a rigid, horizontal bar, then a writhing, spitting tangle of knots and kinks on the ground.

And the horse and rider also had passed safely.

"Fetch him?" asked the yellow one of many legs, as he half-protruded his body from the hole. The tarantula was shaking in unholy glee.

"Fetch him!" shrieked the snake. "I've fetched loose every tooth in my head. D— his wooden stirrup. Why didn't I think? That was my man —my ranchero—and he never knew I struck at him, either."

The centipede came out of the hole, the tarantula hopped back to her brick, and the complaining snake, with bleeding mouth, crawled up on the step again.

"Here comes a coyote," said the tarantula. "Don't think we need stir."

"A coyote," said the centipede, contemptuously. "I've killed dozens of them."

A scrawny, weazen-faced little beast about the color of the centipede trotted down towards the

river, pausing occasionally to nip different parts of his mangy hide and dislodge the fleas which annoyed him. His way led him close to the steps, and one of his pauses occurred when he was but six feet away. A warning rattle startled him; he looked up and sprang sideways, sprang back again as he spied the threatening tarantula, standing erect on her four rear legs; leaped straight ahead; turned around, and with the remark, "Bless my soul," sat down on the centipede.

A coyote in good-humor, singing cheerfully to the night, can create the impression in the minds of uninitiated listeners that a half-dozen agonized dogs are careering around the plain with kettles fast to their tails. When a coyote is really hurt, the effect is doubled; and when to his suffering is added the knowledge—which in this case was gained by a half-second's inspection—that a deadly centipede has buried his fangs and most of his legs at the hair roots on the port-quarter, the cry of protest and pain raised can only be likened to the "ki-yies" of fifty tortured curs in full cry.

Away went the stricken coyote for the river, with the inspiring centipede endeavoring, unsuccessfully, to untangle himself. In three seconds the bank was reached and the chorus ceased for an interval, while the coyote paddled to the surface; then it began again and continued until he had swum across, climbed the bank, and disappeared in a yellow streak behind one of the foot-hills to the eastward.

"Dear me," said the tarantula, "what an unseemly hurry! I wonder where our forty-legged friend is now."

"At the bottom of the river, I should judge," answered the snake, gloomily—"dead, anyhow. Water is fatal to his family."

"How sad! In the midst of life we are in trouble. Well, I've always thought there were too many centipedes in the world."

"And too many snakes and tarantula-hawks—eh, old lady?"

"And too many rancheros," said the tarantula. "There is just one too many for you, my friend. Here he comes again." It is sometimes safe to taunt a rattlesnake—when he has a frightful toothache, for instance. The tarantula hopped close to the wall again, and the snake, making mental note of the last remark, threw himself into his springiest coil and waited for his enemy. The sunburned man was returning, surely enough, and beside him now rode another, a pale-faced, sickly young fellow, and the snake noted that this man was on the farther side, hence he would not block his stroke. Both horses approached at a walk.

"Yes," the ranchero was saying, "you saddle up every day and ride out after cattle, and I'll warrant you're a well man in a month. It's better than any medicine in the world. Of course this country has its drawbacks, but sickness isn't one of them."

"Is that one of the drawbacks — on that step there? Looks to me like a snake."

"By thunder, you're right. That is a drawback, and one of the biggest rattlers I've ever seen. Hold on till I plug him." The fatuous snake was rattling defiance as the long blue tube came out of the scabbard, and continued rattling, waving his head and darting his red tongue while the tube was brought to a motionless position. He was acquainted with club and stone warfare — inherited the knowledge, in fact—but knew nothing whatever of Colt revolvers. So he rattled on, and threatened, and dared, bravely enough, until the tube spat out a tongue—redder than his own—and he felt a smarting pain as though half-cut in two. He twisted and turned, thrashing himself off the steps, nearly paralyzed. He could not understand. His enemy had thrown nothing at him, and he was too far away for that short, blue club to reach him. What was it? He would go into the hole and think it over.

He had wriggled around the corner of the house, and now darted into the hole in the wall where his rattles had shown to the rising sun; and when all but his rattles were again hidden he stopped, with his head within two inches of the other opening.

"You haven't killed him," said the pale young man.

"One shot's enough; they always die when struck, and he won't last till sundown. Yes, that's one of

our drawbacks; another is centipedes; and still another is tarantulas. We grow the biggest specimens of all three, of any county in the State of Texas. You want to look out for them. Never go far without your pocket-flask. It generally cures if you can get drunk—if you can't, you're agoner. Ammonia is good if you can get it, and another good plan is to touch the wound with a red-hot iron—not to burn but to draw. Of course you want to suck the poison out when you're bitten. Just after I bought this place, mother found a rattler camped on a nest of eggs, and if it hadn't been for an old doctor—a college professor out with an expedition—who was stopping overnight with us I'd ha' lost her. No whiskey could cure that bite. Why, the snake was a whopper—nearly as big as that fellow under the house; and the worst of it is—seeing she got well—the snake got away. The old professor was nipped himself by a tarantula a few days afterwards; but he pulled himself through—though it was a close call for so old a man — and about six months ago he sent me a few tarantula-hawks through the mail. He said I needed 'em on this ranch. They were queens, and I think they're breeding nicely. I almost lost my boy, too; a big tarantula dropped down from the ceiling one night—that's the way it felt, he said—and bit him on the cheek; you can see the scar to-day. But an experience I had with a centipede was the worst. I woke up to find him inside my shirt next to the skin, and when I touched

him he sank his legs and fangs into me a quarter of an inch. I threw away the shirt to drown him, and before I got home—I was out on the trail, you know—I was stark crazy and nearly dead; but I had some of the old doctor's stuff left, and came around. There, see there, that's one of the tarantula-hawks yonder—nothing but a big wasp with a bad opinion of tarantulas."

"Is it a drawback, too, in the way of being dangerous?"

"Not much; she's a blessing. You'll never hear of a Western man harming one, and they never harm us—only tarantulas. She's coming this way. She sees something. By thunder, there you are! Just watch that black lump down there by the wall."

"What is it?"

"A whopping tarantula. Just watch and don't speak, and you'll see some fun."

This conversation had taken place within three yards of the tarantula, who had witnessed the discomfiture of the snake, and listened to the account of the boy's and the professor's recovery with various and conflicting emotions; but now, when she saw the approaching wasp, she was really in a "state of mind," and looked around for shelter. Three feet away was the hole from which the snake had emerged in the early morning; and wild with apprehension and hope, she fled to it, but found the entrance blocked by the open jaws of the dying snake.

"Keep out of here," he hissed.

"Let me in," she pleaded; "there's a hawk after me. Please."

"Get out. Get out of this, or the hawk 'll find her work done."

She backed out and raised up in desperation, standing on her four rear legs, and reaching the forward ones, with the heavy palpi over her head, much in the attitude of a woman about to throw a stone with both hands. Above her was the wasp, flashing her red wings and blue body in the sunlight—beautiful, but terrible—and buzzing, buzzing, buzzing, as she darted back and forth. The tarantula though of the space beneath the steps, and in an unreasoning panic of fear, left the wall, hoping to reach in two bounds this place of temporary safety, and not realizing in her terror that the position she had left, with her back against the wall, was the best possible to take in the open. The hawk caught her in mid-air and descended with her. Then she felt it—and oh, the pain of it, and the horror and weakness following that stab! She had no strength to leap now, though the step was but two feet away and the wasp again circling six feet overhead; nor could she rise erect. Slowly she sagged down; her legs extended, her body touched the ground, and she endeavored to crawl. The horrid buzzing grew louder, and she saw the slayer descend. Again the stab of that poisoned weapon, and with it ended life's battle, if not life's conscious-

ness. She could not move, but could feel herself lifted in the air and carried swiftly away.

And around the corner a whitish object quivered all the day, until the sun, having circled the house in its course, shone on it from the west, lighting it again to a brighter hue. Then, with the going down of the sun behind the mesa went out life and motion forever from the whitish object.

THE END

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